



messing about in **BOATS**

Special Features This Issue
"Starvation 2005" – "The Circle Trip"
"Hovercrafting the James River" – "A Racy Story"

Volume 23 – Number 22

April 1, 2006



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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



Every so often reader Bob Whittier of Kingston, Massachusetts, sends me a collection of newspaper clippings related to small boating, often chronicling deaths resulting from accidents caused by ignorance or liquor. Bob has spent much of his life writing about boating topics in magazine columns and books and, as a long-time, experienced small boat veteran, anguishes over the stupidity the uneducated public displays when launching small boats onto waters they do not deem at all threatening.

The note Bob included in his latest mailing to me, which had several newspaper reports on a single canoeing accident in early December, stated:

"Here we go again... people get drunk and on the spur of the moment grab a canoe or whatever, go out on the water at night, and drown. If people living close to waters owning small, light boats could be encouraged to chain and padlock these craft to any handy tree, house, car, or whatever, these spur-of-the-moment occurrences could be usefully reduced in number."

The accident covered in the news reports involved four young (18- to 20-year-olds) people deciding, after a family celebration of a grandmother's birthday, to go out on a pond adjacent to their house in a canoe. Four in one canoe! At night, in early December, water temperature 45 degrees. No pfd's. But, according to follow-up reports, no liquor either. Something happened, the canoe flipped (four in it, remember) and two drowned before help could arrive.

A sad ending to a family celebration, but from the small boat perspective I cannot share in Bob's view that small boat owners should padlock their boats to prevent such occurrences. While it was not specifically stated in the reports, I'd guess that the canoe used belonged to the family, it wasn't "borrowed" from someone else.

In my opinion this sort of accident (which contributes significantly to the annual toll of boating deaths) comes about through ignorance and poor judgement. Boating safety efforts do not reach the non-boating public who may happen to have access to canoes. Even had the canoe in this instance been owned by a neighbor, I cannot support the contention that this neighbor should lock up his boat to protect these young people from their own poor judgement.

Canoes seem to have an innocent appeal that can mask dangers. Canoes are everywhere on inland waters, used for a short season by people on summer holidays. They are an integral part of the vacation experience on the shore of any body of water. Some who

canoe thusly do not apparently identify with small boating to the extent of bothering with safety issues. They learn to paddle much as they would learn to pedal a bicycle. No menace is perceived in going out on water over one's head in an inherently tippy craft with no provision for staying afloat should one tip over other than reliance on swimming ability. In summer a capsized canoe can be a lark in itself for a capable swimmer, something to laugh about afterwards.

Canoes are widely available for rent to people who haven't a clue and who, in some cases, cannot swim. I often illustrate the danger involved in this situation by telling of the person who fell out of a rented canoe when his hat blew off and he reached out for it on the water (from a 1990s Massachusetts report on annual boating fatalities). No pfd, non-swimmer, drowned 100' from shore on a placid pond. No inkling whatever of his impending fate was on this person's mind when he launched that canoe on the pond for a carefree summer outing.

Outboards are far and away the most numerous small boats in use. They so closely resemble an automobile afloat that they attract large numbers of people who never bother to learn anything about potential dangers afloat. My favored anecdote illustrating this involves seeing, early one morning while anchored aboard a 32' sailboat off an island on Salem Sound after an overnight with friends, a 14' or so outboard come around the end of the island with at least six (maybe more) people standing up in it (not a pfd in sight) as there was not enough room for any to sit. They had obviously come some three miles from the nearest ramp. The inches of freeboard may have been tolerable in the morning flat calm, but by late morning when the summer southwester blew up, what would the trip back be like? That lazy man's load would become dangerous, probably at least a couple of ferry trips would be needed if any thought of safety entered the skipper's mind.

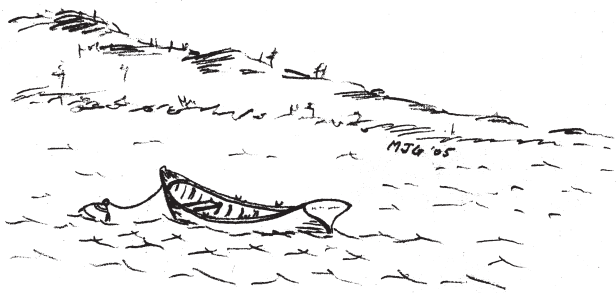
While any boating deaths at all are unacceptable, the actual number as a percentage of the total number of boats in use is tiny. In any human activity which carries within it some potential danger to life or limb, some people will become victims of their own ignorance or stupidity despite the best efforts of society to educate the public. Soon, with our warm, open winter hereabouts, a few stupid and ignorant ones will launch their canoes, kayaks, or small outboards onto water still in the 40s because a sunny 60 degree day has come along. I expect I'll be seeing some more newspaper reports of the results.

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On the Cover...

The end of a late fall day on Maine's remote West Grand Lake for Richard Winslow and his guide. Richard tells us about another of his backwoods canoeing adventures in this issue.



By Matthew Goldman

From the Journals of Constant Waterman

Today I've knocked off early, my wife has come down to the boatyard and we are joining our friend on his little blue sloop, *Dreamtime*. He hasn't bent on the sails as there is little wind in the harbor, so he tips the outboard down and we cast off. It's the first week of April but the air is warm for a change. Our cove, West Cove, has a breakwater halfway across its mouth to keep out the worst of the weather. Just beyond is the mooring field comprising four or five acres. The channel runs between the mooring field to the west and Morgan Point, a peninsula, to the east. The little lighthouse, literally a house, on Morgan Point no longer functions.

A stone's skip beyond the Point is Mouse Island, little more than a water worn rock with four stunted trees that share a cupful of soil and three firmly-rooted cottages. There is no well, no electricity, no deep water. But you'd need a deep pocket to purchase a cottage there and the water between the Point and Mouse is somewhat shoal and liberally spiced with rocks. We round Mouse Island and pass along the back side, pass the Point, and enter the Mystic River. Across the mile-wide gap of the river's mouth is Ender's Island with its massive seawall and cut stone monastery. Immediately above it, across the causeway, is Mason's Island which forms the east bank of the river for more than a mile. Just outside the river's mouth, dead amidships, is Ram Island. The mouth of the river is thick with moorings, both banks have sprouted marinas.

This time of year there's an air of desuetude. There's scarcely another craft upon the water, no boats, no bustle, no noise but the rising breeze. We wend the river, admiring the houses. After 20 minutes we come to a swing bridge, the railroad trestle, clearance about 8'. Beyond is the village of Mystic, spanning the river. Old and refined, it boasts a tiny bascule bridge which opens to water traffic at stated hours but not at this time of year. On the river bank above the village is Mystic Seaport, renowned for its array of antique vessels, including a square-rigged whaling ship, and its maritime museum. In The Seaport's shops, master boatwrights restore old boats and teach their craft to others.

Today we stop at the railroad bridge, explore a marina, run briefly aground on an errant mud bank, meander back down the river. A long, lean shell stroked by eight young women comes zipping beneath the trestle and hurtles by, a white launch in her wake. A Bertram 50 slips from behind a pier and gradually overtakes us. Her skipper, high above in his pilot house, is far too focused on The Beyond to even acknowledge our presence.

At the river's mouth we leave the channel and skirt the back of Ram Island. Privately owned, it comprises 20 acres, has a large house and barns and a sturdy pier within a sheltered cove. As we enter the cove three horses foregather hopefully to watch us, a flock of guinea fowl inspects the beach. We drift a few minutes, then slowly turn and depart, to the obvious chagrin of the horses who have far too few diversions for their liking.

We motor back behind the island. I stand on the bow, my arm around the head stay, and keep my weather eye alert for rocks. The wind has picked up and I'm glad of my heavy jacket. We clear Ram Island, pass behind Whaleback Rock, cross the channel, and round Mouse Island again. Within West Cove the barge is methodically dredging the marina. The yard crew is repairing the water mains. Ashore, two people, their collars turned up, are scraping their bottoms. The yard skiff is busily shunting boats from winter to summer docks. But no one here is out in a boat for the fun of it. Few enough people find April conducive to "...messing about in boats. Simply messing."

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You write to us about...

Activities & Events...

3rd Annual Puddle Duck World Championship

On May 13 we are going to have our Third Annual Puddle Duck World Championship Race at Magnolia Beach, Texas. It is a free event in which anyone can participate or attend and it coincides with the DuckworksMagazine.com messabout. Don't have a PD Racer yet? You can race anyway, there will be two loaner boats available and a pre-race competition to see who gets to use them in the big race. We need volunteers to help us run the race.

For more info see www.shortypen.com/events/2006/world/

Editor Comments: A PD racer in full cry can be seen on the cover of the January 15 issue.

Adventures & Experiences...

The Mariner is One of the Best

I have enjoyed your publication since receiving a subscription last year. I have been involved with boats since acquiring my first sailboat in 1961. It was an 11' Beverly dinghy, cat rigged. I like to have frozen trying to learn to sail it as I capsized every time I got in. If my brother-in-law had not run as a chase boat in his cabin cruiser and warmed me up with heat in his cabin and a little dram, I guess I would have.

I was ready to quit when I met a woman at a cocktail party who claimed to have taught sailing on Long Island sound in Beverly dinghys. She was about eight-and-a-half months pregnant and looked like she would deliver that night. She insisted that we go in the morning and my wife finally agreed to take the risk as she thought that I would drown trying to learn without any instruction. Sailing was just coming to the Atlanta area and you had to just teach yourself.

We went up to Lake Lanier near Atlanta and launched the dinghy. She and I got in and she proceeded to sail around like it was nothing. In about an hour she had me sailing like I had been doing it all my life. I never capsized again unless I wanted to. The next year O'Day came out with the Mariner and when Joan saw it she said, "I want that boat today." We made a trade and Mariner #30 came into our lives. It was a keel model and was great at Lake Lanier.

However, we wanted to take it to the beach and found that the keel really hindered trailer sailing. We were able to trade it for centerboard #1580 and have pulled it all over the south. We trailered it down to the Keys once and many times to Panama City, Florida. We kept the Mariner for 28 years and in 1991, when I retired, we sold it and bought a CT34. I enjoyed the CT34 and sailed to the Bahamas, Mexico, and the Dry Tortugas many times. Now we have just sold the CT34 and bought Mariner #1580 back. I had to do quite a bit of work on her, the centerboard was broken out and it needed some more tender loving care. She is now down in Panama

City where I sail her often. We even trailer her back to Lake Lanier for the summers.

I have decided that the Mariner is one of the best boats one can have, even an old person like me can handle her with little effort, and I can enjoy spending a few days at a time on her alone or with my son when he has time to relax with me.

Well, so much for the past, the reason I am writing this letter is to order a couple of subscriptions to *Messing about in Boats* for a couple of my friends who, on my recommendation, have purchased Mariners. I know they will enjoy your publication as much as I do.

Bill Hicks, Atlanta, GA

An Early Start

By mid-January the winter had already been going on too long for Lorna Perry of East/West Boats in Eliot, Maine, so she rounded up a volunteer to get out on the nearby Piscataqua River in one of their Echo Rowing shells.



Information of Interest...

More About the CROP

I'd like to offer this addendum to the article in the February 1 issue, page 9, by John Stratton about the Connecticut River Oar & Paddle Club. Back in the early 1980s a few of us used to regularly travel over to the Seth Person Boat Yard in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, to attend to our various boating related interests with the friendship and guidance of Jon and Rick Persson. During this period Jon came up with the idea to establish some type of a paddling and rowing organization on the lower portions of the Connecticut River.

His idea needed some input to attempt to get it off the ground. Eventually a group of us volunteers, Jon, Woody Boynton, Greg Scata, and myself, followed shortly thereafter by Cathy Flanagan, Geoff Conklin, and Jon Stratton, started discussing Jon's thoughts and realized that to have such an organization be effective, some sort of a marketing plan involving management, a name, logo, events, fees to be charged for sustaining the club, and an annual celebration at the end of each year were required to attract the public.

At the time Jon wasn't too keen on being president, so we unanimously appointed him as the official founder. He didn't have any choice in the matter. Officers were installed, monthly meetings were established, and slowly the organization began taking shape. During this initial growing faze Jon's brother Rick, along with his friend Robby, would be mocking us, in jest of course, by occasionally lobbing balled-up

papers at us and raucously providing unmentionable epithets. They were somewhat skeptical of our efforts. We, however, persevered and forged ahead with Jon's vision.

Things improved as we came up with plans for various types of outings on the Connecticut River. Then the idea arose to have a Christmas party for members, friends, and relatives to be held in the boatyard's sail loft, an area whose temperature was equal to the outside. I vividly remember that area. During a brief period of that winter, between a marital separation and negotiating for a place to live, I spent some nights sleeping in that loft with my dog Trash huddling right beside me. I have never complained about sail bags since.

By now Rick was seeing that we actually were sincere with our efforts and offered his input by providing heat and other miscellaneous assistance as we prepared for the Christmas party. Later on, as we slowly grew, his participation became well established with his organizing the overnight camping trips to Selden's Island, the building and repairing of canvas covered kayaks, and other boating craft involved with the club's membership.

For the Christmas party we straightened out the boat shop, decorated the loft, and a tree that miraculously appeared, from who knows where, purchased snacks and libations, and with a few individuals contributing warmed-up food dishes, along with stereo music, we partied. Eventually the heat was turned down once the festivities and a few attendees were well under way.

The Christmas party theme of Romp and Revel was an unbelievable success with its camaraderie, hilarity, a reasonable resemblance of dancing, along with singing, or attempting to, of Christmas carols, a very inspirational and spirited event. Actually, a lot of spirits were consumed that night, especially the one that a certain member brought in, a concoction of heated cider and an overabundance of Captain Morgan's rum.

The club began to flourish. Although a member, but being out of the area for many years, I still understand that the tradition has continued. A very unique organization, thanks to Jon's belief and inspiration as shared by the aforementioned individuals who assisted with the growth of the Connecticut Oar and Paddle Club. The rest is as the article stated.

Michael Sherwood, Bourne, MA

Opinions...

Edward Hopper Cover Print

What a great drawing you put on the cover of the February 1, 2006 issue. I normally think of oil paintings being associated with Edward Hopper, but it is obvious from the cover he could also excel in black and white prints.

He also excelled in drawing boats. The sheerline of the heeled catboat is perfect and the hull wave amidships and under the counter is just right. Edward knew his boats. Even the sail is shown filled correctly.

The proper drawing of a boat's or ship's sheerline has eluded even great and famous painters. Apparently the only curved line they have mastered is the one they learned in art school drawing nudes.

However, one item in the drawing is incongruous. The boat seems to be carrying a

lee helm. When you think of a classic catboat, you think of a strong weather helm. Supposedly you can identify a catboat skipper by his massive shoulders and biceps from years of steering his boat. The helmsman on the cover certainly meets this criteria.

Then I decided that, with a lee shore rapidly approaching, they are about to jibe around. The intense look of the man on the quarter staring at the massive boom confirms this. Even the helmsman is looking at this skull-cracker rather than at the luff of the sail.

Hopper's drawing superbly captures the tension of the moment when the helmsman ordered "hard alee!"

I, and perhaps many other *MAIB* readers, believe great naval architects are also great artists with a distinctive quality and a signature line to their work. Hopper probably had a particular boat in mind when he drew the catboat. Perhaps *MAIB* cat lovers might know which one.

John W. Cooper, San Antonio, TX

The Case for Apprenticing

Your article on the Ray Larsen Forge in the February 1 issue was an excellent piece of reporting. But I have a problem with that guy. I'm sure he's a nice fellow and all, but how can any skilled craftsman work a trade for 30 years and never once think about taking on an apprentice? There are people out there who would saw their right arm off to get a shot at entering such a trade. Of course, sawing off your right arm would be a bit counter-productive to the goal, so would-be blacksmiths should not take that literally.

Now I know that we Americans believe deeply in a social model in which the actions and decisions of inherently selfish operators somehow produce positive social results in aggregate for everyone. There may indeed be some truth to it. For instance, the likelihood of me being run over in my rowboat by some maniac in a sewage spuming power cruiser decreases proportionally with every rise in the price of crude engineered by conniving businesses and Wall Street traders. By this model, the merits of which surely can be debated, Mr. Larsen has every right to pursue his decision.

But I would like to offer two observations on this. First, Mr. Larsen's operation is not, as you describe it, really a "boutique." Mr. Larsen, along with the rest of the blacksmiths throughout the world, is keeping alive institutional skills and memories that future generations will find vital to their well-being as the world transitions from the fossil fuel age back to more traditional models. Thus, he is more akin to a librarian, maintaining a vital store of information (i.e., certain practical skills) for future use by others. If blacksmiths must currently operate in "boutique" mode in order to keep their skills alive for a time when they are actually necessary, then so be it.

Now, this may sound like a lot of pointy-headed nonsense to Mr. Larsen and a lot of others. It sounds that way to me too now that I look at it. But the free market system makes no claim that individual operators have any awareness that their activities are contributing to the aggregate good. In fact, thinking about it, if they were aware, then the whole free market model that we are having jammed down our throats by the capitalist elites would have no basis, as it would allow that people may act out of motivations beyond simple selfishness and self-interest. So a reactionary

smearing of my febrile ivory tower ravings only goes to prove the point, I think.

Which brings me to my second observation, which is a bit more on the practical side than the first. Mr. Larsen indicates that it would be "too burdensome overseeing and instructing a wannabee blacksmith instead of just getting on with his work." This is just not true, especially in the case of a serious apprentice. Apprentices increase a shop's production and profitability. They are there specifically to address the mundane, unskilled, and repetitive tasks that are nonetheless integral to the proper operation of a business so that the skilled labor can focus on what's really generating the cash, finished product. In the course of it all, the apprentice learns the tools and techniques of the trade and is given access to the equipment upon which those skills can be refined so that he can become a contributing member of the organization. In my business, if we had to have journeymen electricians focus their energy on unskilled tasks like bolting wire hangers to girders we'd be broke in short order.

Now, without a doubt, pneumatically actuated hammers and gas-fired forges have superseded some of the more traditional uses of apprentice blacksmiths, but surely there are still chores that serve as distractions from the skilled work. So I hope that Mr. Larsen won't keep the door closed to apprentices in the event any turn up.

Brian Salzano, East Patchogue, NY

P.S. My '86 Seapearl is still for sale. Particulars have been previously published. Any interested parties may feel free to ring me at (631) 289-3732.

Free Boat Delivery

Thanks for the heads up about the California reader who may call me about free boat delivery from the East Coast. I guess California dreamin' includes free gas or diesel, free motels, repairs, and the like. Sometimes I've had trouble explaining to California people why delivering a boat 3,000 miles has to be so expensive, but I never heard anyone suggest free before. The only ways I can think of to accomplish that, besides wild generosity from a stranger, involve possible jail time. Now I'm afraid to offer any more free boats.

P.S. The "Annie's Toy" boat delivery article hit the spot on a cold winter day. I might not get all the way through in midsummer, but we're all guilty of a little dreamin'.

Boyd Mefferd, Boyd's Boats, Canton, CT

A Different Opinion on Car Topping

Steve Axon's letter in the January 15 issue stated that boats should be car topped right side up. I strongly disagree. The reason for my disagreeing is that I feel that the wind going past a moving vehicle tends to follow a curved line over the vehicle. If the boat is right side up the bow and stern sections that sweep upward both cross these wind lines. If the boat is upside down the curve that is built into most boats will fit right into these wind lines and the entire package will be more streamlined. Another good argument for the upside down carry is that the tie-downs on the boat are closer to the tie-downs on the vehicle. The shorter the lines, the better they will work.

In my little corner of the world we have a lot of sea kayakers who mostly carry their kayaks right side up and I always think that they are wrong. They give me all kinds of reasons why they do it but my feeling is that they all have stock in Yakima. Many of them

have spent more on their racks than I have on my boat.

If you have enough money you can buy a set of rollers and a set of fitted cradles for the front rack. This will make getting the boat up there easy. Now you need a 6' stepladder to climb up to attach the bow lines. The upcurved bow on many of these kayaks is 4' or more above the hood of the vehicle.

Keeping the boat upside down will keep the boat lower and the bow line shorter and the boat will ride more securely. It could make the difference with getting under the drive up at MacDonald's or even into your own garage.

Mississippi Bob, Apple Valley, MN

Projects...

Follow-up on the SUV Boat

A last minute development on my nesting dinghy ("An SUV Boat," February 15) is deciding that the best way to transport the dinghy is on a hitch carrier. I will field test this approach this spring.

Bob Dalley, Lake Junaluska, NC



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If most preaching is preaching to the choir (and I suspect that it is), that would only be because when the preaching starts it's the choir that shows up. By the same token, when I saw that *Sailing Small, Inspiration and Instruction for the Pocket Cruiser*, edited by Stan Grayson, was available to review, I jumped on it.

After our years on the Missouri River, a waterway which limits our choices to power boats or downhill travel only, I have felt an increasing longing to sail again, to return to my boating roots. So this winter, as I am building the tiny sailboat which will be Gloria's introduction to sailing and my aforementioned return to my boating roots, we are pondering a sailboat we can sleep in, whether we buy or build.

It must be trailerable behind my six-cylinder Ford or some similar elderly pickup truck, reasonably easy to launch and load, to rig and pack up, and able to beach or dry out on the tide. What better book for us, then, than one titled *Sailing Small*? For us, boating at its best is travel, often overnight or weekend travel. Sunset over the water, morning coffee afloat. I dream of living aboard but have taken on obligations and animals that make that impractical. We camp out aboard instead. This makes us exactly Grayson's intended audience. He writes in his introduction:

"None would argue against the broadening experience of the world cruiser, about which a number of excellent books have been written. But this book is not about that sort of lifestyle. It is primarily about the sort of weekend/vacation sailing or extended coastwise cruising in which people from all walks of life, working people with jobs, families, and diverse shoreside interests, engage."

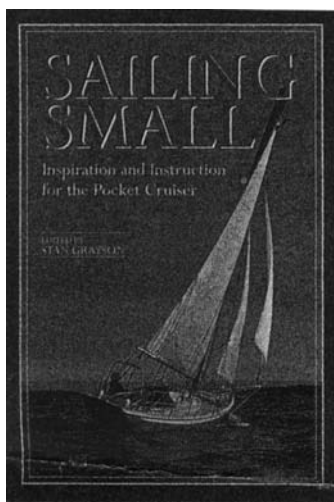
He also mentions that when selecting authors for this work he avoided those "whose aim was to perform headline-grabbing stunts in overly tiny boats..." focusing instead on people who "...bought boats appropriate to their needs." To put it another way, *Sailing Small* is for people who enjoy messing about in boats.

Although Grayson is listed as "editor," he chooses not to remain entirely behind the scenes. Besides writing the introduction, he writes the first chapter, setting the tone and laying out the parameters for the book to follow.

Acknowledging that terms like "small boat" have started more debates than they have ever ended, he defines the small cruising sailboat for the purposes of this book as 24' and under. He uses "his" chapter to present charts of representative boats; "Three Weekenders," "A Diverse Trio," and trios of 22-footers, 23-footers, and 24-footers. He



Book Review



Sailing Small Inspiration and Instruction for the Pocket Cruiser

Edited by Stan Grayson
6"x9" - 192 pgs + 8 pg color insert
ISBN 1-928862-08-X \$16.95

Reviewed by Jeff McFadden

gives gentle but realistic reviews of the West Wight Potter, the Catalina 22, and other readily available and affordable small cruisers. He doesn't limit himself to boats that are still in production, nor does he try to be encyclopedic. He makes no pretense of covering every boat out there. Rather, he presents an overview of some tiny, some middle-sized, some very inexpensive, and some high end craft more as food for thought than as an attempt to provide the means to make a decision on the spot.

The meat of the book, though, is seven chapters by seven different individuals outlining their experiences with small cruising sailboats. This portion of the book begins with "40 Years and 70,000 Miles in a Small Boat," Charles Stock's story of a lifetime spent cruising coastal England on a 16-1/2' (!) gaff cutter which he finished on a commercially built bare Fairey Falcon hull, "...four layers of agba veneer laid diagonally and hot-molded with no concern for weight savings," which he bought in 1963, giving him time for considerable experience prior to *Sailing Small's* copyright date of 2004.

The text chapters are augmented with one "chapter" of high quality glossy photos of the boats featured in the articles, including cabin and arrangement views. Charles

Stock's 16-1/2' gaff cutter has a very small, yet very lived-in and homey looking, cabin.

Any of the written chapters would be right at home in *Messing About in Boats*, although most of them are somewhat longer than the usual *MAIB* article. Each text chapter ends with a box showing specifications for the boat therein, including length on deck, length waterline, beam, draft, displacement, ballast, and sail area.

The authors present varying degrees of specifics regarding interior and deck layouts and coping with small spaces. Galleys and heads are obviously difficult on small sailing cruisers, as they are on our small river cruiser *MorningStar*.

The writers present the sort of information which one can turn over in one's head while dreaming about boats, and most of it would be useful, or at least somewhat useful, in choosing or laying out a small cruiser. It becomes clear throughout the book that most of the authors are very fond of their boats and are comfortable with their decision to "go small," even though they acknowledge the drawbacks. However, one of the authors not only fell out of love with his small boat, but turned his back on the sea and expresses some bitterness about its deadly ways. Life goes on. I feel the same way about Interstate highways.

Some writers provide useful commentary on the handling and manners of their boats including some under stressful weather conditions. It is clear that the heavier displacement boats handle rough weather the best.

Most chapters descend, at least briefly, into "How I Spent My Summer Vacation" essays. Some of it is fascinating, some rather boring, but all in all *Sailing Small* is a book that I am glad to own and one I expect I will reread more than once.

Sailing Small ends with a chapter by Paul Gartside, a designer and builder who not only sails a 22' gaff cutter, but who also designed and built it. He is, to my taste, the best writer in the book. His closing paragraphs tell the story of a messer-builder's life and curse better than I've ever seen it told elsewhere.

Does it make sense to build a boat rather than buy? The answer lies in an examination of motive. If you are considering building as a means to get a boat and go sailing, the answer is simple, forget it. The secondhand boat market is awash in the product of four decades of mass production. You can pick up a good used boat for about 30% of the material cost of building your own, never mind the years of effort and the upset neighbors. If you are wise in your choice you might get your money back when you come to sell it, perhaps even with a little extra if you do some fixing up.

The only possible justification for building is that you are afflicted with the need to do so. In that case, I am afraid you are a lost soul and are bound for the same institution in which I have spent my entire life. But you know, it's not so bad in here. It smells nice and we have a lot of fun. Every day there is tangible progress to admire and you would be amazed at the number of visitors we get. Sometimes, when I blow the dust off the windows and look out at the world, I am damned if I can tell who's more crazy, them or me. But the best part is that every so often we finish one and then they let us out to go sail it around for a while before we have to go back for more treatment. If that sounds like you, go for it. There are far worse ways of using up your days.



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Exploration, A Duckah! Sea Pearl.

Here it is the third of January and, while I don't make formal resolutions, I did take myself firmly in hand and pointedly suggest that I need to keep up with the paperwork this year. The balmy weather of the past week has put me prematurely in mind of spring and the glory of Starvation. At this far remove from the actual event there is very real danger of romantic aggrandizement. The strictly factual memories of incredibly sumptuous food, jolly good fellowship, and gorgeous boats streaking across pellucid aquamarine waters could possibly be subconsciously enhanced by rosy tinting. Rest assured that I shall endeavor to keep a firm rein on my emotions.

As it has been for some years now, the meet is held the weekend before Memorial Day in the boonies of east central Utah. Somewhere in the vicinity it is carved in stone that the skies will be clear, the temps mild, and the breeze fresh on that weekend.

The affair has wide appeal as evidenced by the strong turnout of women and children. My own wife is always ready to go. Daughter Sharon brings the Palmer delegation, helpful for loading and cooking. Son Steven, a gung-

Dwight with Exploration rail down.



Starvation 2005

By Jim Thayer

Photographers: Axon, Gale, Hicks, Palmer, Thayer

ho sailor, brings two boys, but his wife hasn't seen the light yet. Joan, Megan, and Carolyn go out some but tend to favor the beach, which is fine. No bikinis though. Helen would come but Steve won't let her off work. Of course, Heather is there, whipping past everybody in the beautiful Girly Boat.

Perhaps most noteworthy in an outstanding fleet was Willie's new pulling boat. Jack Hicks has built a beautiful 2/3 replica of his own famous boat. It was Willie's first public performance and he did very well except for some glitch that precipitated a mental crash. By Kokopelli in September he had mastered her and was having a ball. Kids with resourceful and indulgent grandfathers are indeed lucky.

Continuing on the kiddie tack, my own grandson, Tanner, took an interest in rowing

the Superlight Urbanna Rocket and got on very well. The Superlight used to be the sought after ride for the kiddie rowing race at MASCF. Alas, those kids are beyond college now. Last time I was at St. Michaels the little guys all had kayaks and nobody even noticed my poor boat. Our backward times are fading fast.

Well, Garrett Gilmore, who has been bringing his larger Joli Fille Whitehall for years, got to looking at the Rocket and something clicked. He started talking money, a subject that concentrates my mind wonderfully. So the boat that I have rowed all over the country for 20 years or so went home with her new captain.

The Superlight was an experimental craft that turned out wonderfully well. I built her to blow away everybody at the Urbanna Cuban Bandera race. Worse luck, Dusty Rhoades showed up with his new Doug Martin-designed Mocking Gull (or Laughing Gull, it was on the cover of *WoodenBoat* years ago), a 20-footer. I thought that she would never make the turns but I found out differently.

With full gelcoat and barely adequate flotation, the Superlight weighs barely 30lbs. I was dubious about the 3/4" square rails but they seem to be adequate. I couldn't tell that they flexed appreciably. The Old Dear blew off the top of the truck at 30mph (I had taken off the lines but forgotten the boat) and landed on her snoot. It grunched the top of the stem a little but otherwise she was unharmed.

By golly, Jack and Willie have opened my eyes. I've got four grandbabies who are just right to get started. We'll have sealed fabric end compartments filled with milk jugs, and foam under the thwart. Trading the gelcoat for paint will save 7-8lbs. Should be able to get a suitable boat about 25lbs.

You may think me hopelessly archaic in this era of video games, but I have a clear vision (over my shoulder) of future meets with these little buggers chasing each other all over the lake. What I'm advocating is getting the kid on the water in his own boat. One can argue whether rowing or sailing is the way to start. I would favor rowing as the gear is simpler and they can go wherever they want without the frustration involved in getting to windward. Sudden winds are less a problem and they will develop confidence as well as muscle.

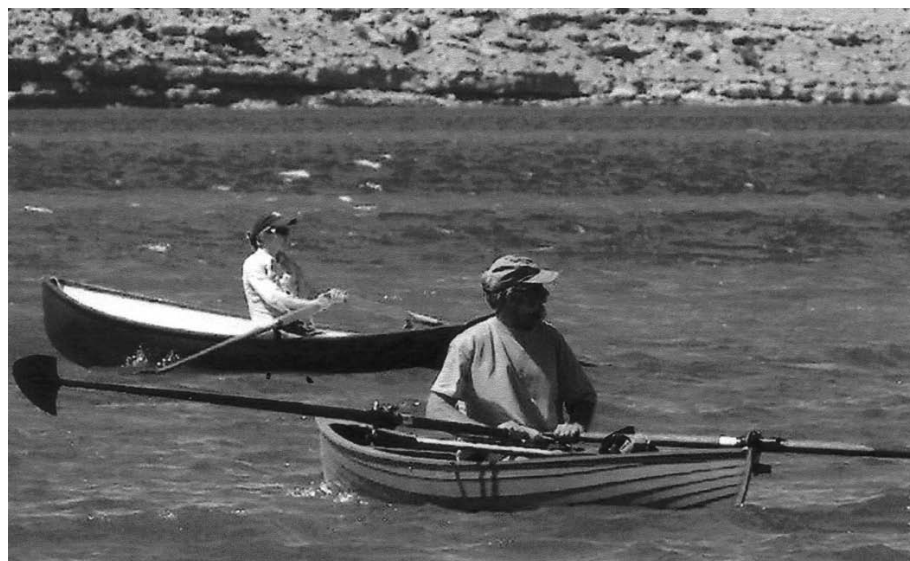


A Duckah! and Potter 19.



Tom and the Hatches enjoy the A Duckah! Note sail reefed.

Kate in Express and Steve in L'Artiste's canoe.



There's the problem! Adults have this mindset that rowing is work. Kids are fiends for work. Like ants, they haul stuff, pile stuff, tote things their own weight, hoist stuff up trees, dig sand like it's their last chance, etc. Admittedly, if you try to channel this effort into projects that you deem worthwhile they soon bog down. But turn them loose with a spare oar, a water bottle, and a good pfd and they will be all over the lake. Evan and Elliot Hatch helped make the point with their Mouse Boats. Don't sweat it, Mom!

Steve Axon, who isn't all that dependable anymore, showed up with the Sea Pearl and his lovely daughter, Kate, with a contingent of college chums who helped lighten the geezer mix. Also new this year was that legendary Kokopelli cruiser, Jay Lapreau, momentarily at large from his computer lab.

If there was one sailboat that seemed to stand out, it was Tom Gale's A Duckah! with its elegant bright sheer strake and off-white sail. The vision of that exquisite double ender furrowing the bright white capped waters as the crew took their ease suddenly shuts out the sere winter landscape as I gaze wistfully out the window and brings a smile to my wizened visage. Seriously, I would love to see more of these slick boats around. I am ready for the formation of the Desert Duckahs. I picture a t-shirt with a fierce looking duck with two oars and a bandoleer of beer bottles and a captain's cap. Contest?

Of course, Dwight Nicholson was out with the Expedition 18 (heck, maybe it was an Exploration, I can't keep 'em straight. Same problem with Dwight and Dewitt!) relentlessly hunting the big gusts. Junction sailor John Denison was there with his WW Potter 19, a cabin boat.

John delights in the creature comforts, the stove with state-of-the-art coffee equipment, lights, potty, dry bunk, good book, etc. I must say that when he does come ashore he is still the same smiling, good-natured fellow. But I worry! Have you heard what he has gone and done now? Bought a MacGregor 26 with 60 horse motor. I wonder what the Guinness record for towing small boats is?

Now the signal event of the meet, if not the entire year. Brace yourself. Dewitt was there with his lovely wife Deb. At the Saturday night bash he kissed her in front of the entire company. So it's official, he does have a wife.

L'artiste was there with his pretty little canoe which he continues to modify. The artistic temperament, I guess. He will probably never get it just right. A good system, I guess. Keeps you involved and isn't too expensive.

Dang (I didn't know that was a southern expression), I nearly forgot Ron Roberts, he of the forward facing oars (actually backward!). We have Ron to thank for a bunch of video, especially the soul stirring A Duckah! footage. Ron sent me a VHS tape which presented a sticky technical challenge. I put it on a DVD from whence it was pushed into the Digital 8 and then piped into the Apple for editing. I tell you, it ain't easy being a boatbuilder.

Lots of variety on the video. Starvation, of course, and then the Pend Oreille Rendezvous. The icing on the cake is a cruise on the Nile. Some reviewers have found it a tad heavy on felluca sailing but I think we have enough temples to call it well rounded.

Rush your \$18.50, cash, check, or MO to Super Boat Video, Grand Mesa Boatworks LLC, 16654 57-1/2 Rd., Collbran, CO 81624.



Saturday bash. John's got the jump.



Three Men in a Boat. Why no jigger?



Nina, Exploration, A Duckah!



Dwight on the edge.

Steven. Live music.



Joan at "work."



Ron. Live music.



The cool October air was intoxicating as Rob and I loaded our canoe at the northern tip of Sysladobsis Lake in Washington County, Maine. All around us low mountains rose above the shoreline of Sysladobsis, a Native American name meaning "Rocky Lake."

"Here's a special Dick Winslow paddle for you," Rob said. "I picked it up specially for this trip." I hefted the handsome wood paddle, acknowledging the perfect gesture to begin this expedition. Rob even knew exactly what size paddle I'd need, this was my fourth consecutive fall trip with him as guide, friend, and naturalist.

There is always something special about an end-of-season canoeing trip. By this time of year everything and everyone has cleared out, summer people, kids' camp groups, jet skis, motorboats, bugs. Only the loons remain. My big trips of the year, strenuous whitewater Canadian expeditions and Atlantic Ocean kayaking, were over. This last paddle of 2005, easy and relaxing in home waters, was something to be savored before the snow and ice would take over. For four days and three nights Rob and I would become beat canoeists, not on-the-road à la Kerouac, but rather on-the-water, bound for the distant horizon.

We would paddle down to Dobsis Dam, portage from the 304' water level of Sysladobsis over a diminutive height-of-land and drop to the 298' level of Pocumcus Narrows. This passageway, in turn, fanned out in all directions to a sprawl of lakes, bays, and streams with different names, all at the same water level. Continuing counterclockwise, our trip would proceed north through Pocumcus Lake, West Grand Lake, Junior Lake, and the Bottle Lake take-out, just a short distance from our Sysladobsis put-in. Our circle trip would spread out in an all over-the-map, gone-wild labyrinth, a flat-water canoeist's paradise.

I could paddle you through our expedition, cove by cove, campsite by campsite, submerged boulder by submerged boulder, but that guidebook approach would rob future canoeists of their own sense of discovery. Nevertheless, I'd like to share the flavor of this spectacular area, so a few incidents are worthy of mention.

At our first campsite, below Dobsis Dam at the Dennison portage, we raced against the oncoming dusk to pitch tents and prepare supper. During all my canoe trips over the year I had learned the hard way that I have to eat lightly before bedding down in a sleeping bag. Often we had had to settle for a pinched space campsite that limited any after-dinner hikes to shake down a typical lumberjack-style meal. With this in mind, I had brought along on this trip some favorite soups, chowders, and bisques, two cans of each.

Beside our first evening's cook fire, Rob mentioned another guide we both knew well. This fellow is noted for his Down East Maine humor, which he dispenses freely during his cooking stints. On occasion he has become so wrapped up in regaling his guests with tall stories that he has either overcooked or nearly burned the food. For his part, Rob is not prone to such distractions and he duly served up a piping hot soup. It was delicious, yet the soup seemed a bit heavy in consistency and flavor. "I couldn't read the can labels in the darkness," Rob confessed the next morning. "We ended up having a combination of split pea and lentil."

The Circle Trip Canoeing Maine's West Grand Lake Area in the Fall

By Richard E. Winslow III

Again, for Ed Masteller



The lure of open water. Sysladobsis Lake extends to the center of the universe... or thereabouts.

By late that same morning we landed at a curved sandy beach, a miniature Cape Cod stretching out into a narrows. This idyllic spot offered shelter for our beached canoe and a chance to walk. We noticed two loons swimming nearby, a mature mother and her undersize, apparently sickly, offspring in tow. The older loon looked back from time to time to check on her malnourished chick. Farther out two or three immature but healthy loons were taking shallow dives to feed. "Soon they'll be down at the ocean where they'll winter," Rob said. "They don't know that now, but when cold weather comes the frozen lake will deprive them of their food supply." Thus, by instinct, the immature loons, at first ice, will fly away.

For lunch we landed at the Birches on a thumb of land sticking out into the West Grand Lake and periodically cut off by high water from the mainland. I had looked forward to this stop in order to explore the Darrow Wilderness Trip Camp. Over the years I have visited dozens of such camps, just as other people might enjoy going to art museums, ballparks, or historic homes. At first glance I recognized every standard feature, the main building with its mess hall facing the lake, cabins in back to house the junior campers, shelters for the older boys and girls, and, some distance away on a secluded cove, the director's lodge, set apart for peace and privacy.

Since 1957 this coed camp has sent thousands of kids into the Maine and Canadian mountains and waterways for "a life-changing experience in the wilderness," as its camp directory puts it. Back in the

1940s, when I first went to camp, the directors didn't use such ad copy, work ethic descriptions, yet my own experiences as a young camper changed my life, and to this day I continue to seek out wild places. As I looked around the camp, now closed for the season, I could not help but hope that some of the Darrow alumni will advance the cause of exploration and conservation, singing the song of the backpack, canoe, tent, and campfire. I hope that such outdoor missionaries will be able to convince corporate America to reverse its wasteful ways, clean up the atmosphere and the waterways, and thus support canoeing America.

By late morning on the following day we landed at Bottle Island Campsite, a convenient lunch stop. At first we thought the site was occupied, we spotted a blue tarp draped over a pole between two trees, a firepit littered with beer cans, and a pot containing burned spaghetti. Nope, just the remnants of hit-and-run campers. Even if we did our good deed for the day and cleaned up the campsite, there was no way we could follow the "carry out" part of the "carry in, carry out" rule, our canoe was already packed to the gunwales. These fly-by-night vandals in their own small way were just as environmentally irresponsible as loggers, developers, and other profiteers.

During lunch we analyzed our options. The billowing gray sky had dropped to the horizon and left a squishy feeling in the air. Then came isolated raindrops. With a major storm predicted, we anticipated a much harder rain. "Well, we've accomplished all that we wanted to do on this trip," Rob said. I agreed, recalling an old adage from my Army days, "When in doubt, use common sense." We quickly decided to shorten the expedition by one day. As it turned out, the two-day rain blast that followed was the worst in New England for some years.

Bottle Lake itself proved to be anticlimactic, an unending shoreline clutter of camps/cottages/boat sheds, just like a strip-mall highway on the outskirts of any American city. Then we saw the first and only motorboat we encountered on the entire trip. Some old coot at the stern did not see us until almost the last moment. With a quick jerk on the tiller, he managed to avoid us.

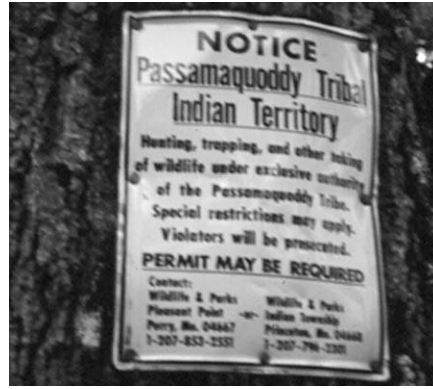
Soon we landed at the northern end of Bottle Lake, our take-out point, where wind-driven rain seemed to pelt us from almost every possible direction.

Notwithstanding our hasty and soaked exit, the lasting impression of the full-circle trip for Rob and me was one of pure elation. For those of us who pursue the canoeing lifestyle there is always a waterway left unpaddled, a trip we feel almost compelled to take next year. In our case, it would be the eastern maze of this great chain of lakes and streams. Rob agreed to inquire ahead of time whether or not the shallow connecting channel between Pleasant and Scraggly Lakes would have sufficient water to ease our passage.

Concurring with "A Geography of Hope" (a 1991 essay by noted nature writer Wallace Stegner, who eloquently championed the preservation of remaining wild areas), we likewise sought out the lakes, rivers, and streams of hope, ones still pristine, undammed, unpolluted, and undeveloped, where we would dip our paddles for no other reason than that we loved to do it. Like the loons on their own full-circle lake-ocean-lake migrations, we, too, will return.



Don't stub the canoe keel! Sysladobsis's Native American name ("Rocky Lake") lives up to its reputation.



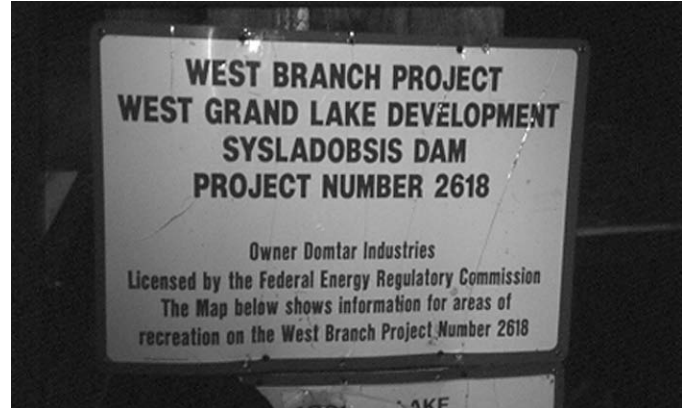
Save the land as we have for generations. Passamaquoddy Indian tribal law applies to the Junior Stream Campsite area.



Home ahead for the night. Rob poles toward Dobsis Dam and Dennison portage for the campsite take-out.



The Dobsis Explorers' Club cabin affords a perfect picnic site for lunch. Note dogsleds nailed to the beams.



One commission is one too many. Governmental bureaucracy pervades everywhere, even down to Project Number 2618.



Dobsis Dam complex includes a sluice between Sysladobsis and Pocumcus Lakes for migrating fish.

Lunch at the Darrow Camp beach. Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* never expressed paradise better: A loaf of bread, a jug of wine (in this instance, a canteen of water), and thou (the best guide in the state of Maine).



From a sandy beach, Rob looks for a lead through a boulder train ahead.

One of Junior Lake's boulders is too massive to haul home for use as a steppingstone or a fireplace hearth.



My hovercraft nestled on its trailer, turning off I81 on the Buchanan Exit 162, I traveled five miles east on old Rte. 11, turning off just outside of town into Water Street to the Virginia State Game boat ramp. As I slowly moved along, the asphalt seems to be rippled so I go slowly. On my left, a long boat mounted on a six-wheeled trailer appears. Curious that I am, the truck seems to stop of its own accord. Walking over to the information panel, I learned that the boat on the trailer was a batteau. This 50' long by 8' wide, white oak planked, doubled ended boat with a long handled rudder at each end stared back at me. The information case said the boat weighted in at 4,000lbs, thus the six-wheeled trailer.

Before the 1800s, batteaus traveled down the James River from Covington, Virginia, through where Buchanan would be, into Balcony Falls, and then on to Richmond. The boats carried freight from western Virginia to the Chesapeake, surfing through the river falls, sometimes surviving and other times not. Six men operated a batteau with its flat bottom, flared sides, and long, narrow bow. Maneuverability in whitewater was fair at best. Poling was accomplished in the flat water sections with 8" wide walkways attached to each gunwale so crewmen could set their poles and walk down the length of the boat, applying push off the bottom as the boat moved along. Two crewmen on each side worked the poles and one crew on each long tailed rudder. With a load of 10,000lbs on board, the crew had their hands full navigating the river.

Standing there beside the display stirred my imagination as to what the area was like when these large heavy boats plied the alternately calm and furious James River. Was this display just the tip of the iceberg of Buchanan's boating history? To look at Buchanan today, with about 1,200 souls in residence, one would have no idea that this area had hundreds of people coming and going in a bustling growing community. "Yes you're right," I couldn't resist going to the Buchanan Library on High St. to satisfy my curiosity that the batteau had inspired. I knew that the 50' long boat on the trailer was a replica, but it whispered of long, lazy days on the river stealing back to the early 1800s.

The library was located in an old building, and when my feet touched the planked floor it squeaked and moaned at the same step. The librarian directed me to a bookshelf section and, upon removing several old tomes, I took my ease in an upholstered chair, one of four. I love books. You can take your time and go back to previous pages at leisure if you miss something. Books were a great idea from the past, feel good in the hands, and speak the language the author knew so well. This is what I found out when I pulled this batteau thread going back to the late 1700s and early 1800s.

It seems that Buchanan is located between two principle transportation corridors, the great northeast-southwest overland route west of the Blue Ridge Mountains between Pennsylvania and the old upland south, and the James River, the principle river system of central Virginia that provides an east-west route for transport of goods from mountain and valley regions, through the Piedmont to the Tidewater and Chesapeake Bay (information provided by the Buchanan Revitalization Program).

The James River Company was established in 1785 to improve navigation on the

Hovercrafting the James River at Buchanan, Virginia

By Steve Kryzsko



James River by cutting sluices through the rapids. A sluice was usually cut through the bank at the edge of a fast rapid so the boats could avoid the rocks. By 1851, 197 miles of canals were completed from Buchanan to Richmond. Traveling the canal system by freighter took seven days while the faster packet boats designed for mail and passengers took three days and nights. The packet boats were pulled along the towpath by three horses in tandem changed every 12 miles. The passengers paid \$8 for the trip from Richmond to Lynchburg with onboard sleeping and dining accommodations.

The canal system was not continuous from Richmond to Buchanan, being composed of 11 canals, each with a dam forming a broad reach of flat water. Each canal began at a dam and ended at an outlet lock which dropped the boat into the river. Boats were raised or lowered up to 13' according to river levels.

The James River and Kanawha Canal enjoyed continuous use for about 25 years, but in 1880 the canal was sold to the Richmond and Allegheny Railroad. The railroad used the established towpath as a roadbed for the steel tracks. The railroads provided faster and cheaper transport for people and goods from the Alleghenies to the Chesapeake.

Today, as I back my trailer down the ramp at Buchanan, there is little evidence that a canal system ever existed. The boat ramp is located right off High St. and seems to be a gathering place for people. They cruise by and if anything is happening they stop, lend a hand, or just watch or talk. Very friendly people live here. The ramp is made of concrete so the frequent rises in water level don't wash it away. On November 28, 2005, the area upriver experienced heavy rains and the river rose 8' in 24 hours, covering the launch ramp and into the first level of the boat parking.

Launching the hovercraft during high water is easier, for the land-water transition

is more gentle and not the 4' drop when the water is low. When the water is low I usually back the trailer into the water and float off the hovercraft. Most times the ground is dry but driving the craft through the parking lot doesn't work because the air blast kicks up a huge cloud of dust. I always have to watch out for gravel contacting the parked cars. If the launch area is grass covered there is no real problem driving the craft from land to water or visa versa.

On a Saturday morning in the summer of '05, Andy Wolf and I loaded my hovercraft with snacks, water, and ourselves and proceeded upriver toward Eagle Rock, 21 miles as the river twists and turns toward the break in the Appalachian Mountains. I had called Andy on Thursday to see if he would like to take a hovercraft ride on the James River at Buchanan. He said he would meet me there, his house being in Lexington, Virginia, about 25 miles east of Buchanan on I81. Andy is an interesting guy. He has built traditional wooden boats for many years, working to build specific boats that his clients wanted. I was to introduce him to his first hovercraft experience.

The trip upriver and back took about 3-1/2 hours for a total of about 45 miles on four gallons of gas. We averaged about 15-18mph across flat water, picking our way through numerous rapids. We encountered 20 to 30 canoes and kayaks, receiving waves from most people, with a few grim looks. When I see canoes ahead I move the craft to the opposite shore and run at a slower speed about 10' from the bank, crossing over gravel bars as the craft moves along.

Water hazards that are deadly to hovercraft are snags sticking out of the water and sometimes pieces of metal just below the surface. The inflated skirt that surrounds the craft is vulnerable to rips, tears, and punctures. Since the skirt is made of 18oz vinyl material reinforced with fiberglass between the layers, a liquid patch material and some extra vinyl take care of any holes. In a pinch, if there is a long tear, small zip ties can be used to stitch the rip together. A small air loss in the skirt doesn't seem to make any difference to hovercraft performance.

As we moved along we saw a lot of bird life that would move ahead as we crossed the water. We saw two eagles, about 20 long-legged blue herons, and some 15 kingfishers that seemed to fly in bursts of speed. I tried to keep up with a kingfisher but he pulled away from me at 30mph. As we were outdistanced I had to slow down for the next rapid. Normally I don't go fast on the river, but when there are no canoes visible on a long, flat section of river my old motorcycle days return and off I go. On a local lake I've had the hovercraft up to 38mph with plenty of room to slow down.

Stopping a hovercraft can be a problem. When I cut the thrust propeller the craft continues on and actually speeds up a little before it starts to slow. The skirt is still inflated and only the bottom edge is touching, which doesn't cause any degree of drag to speak of. My policy is to start slowing down a good distance from where I want to be stopped.

Passing the huge cliffs at Eagle Rock we landed on a small pebbled beach and stepped out on the rocks with dry feet. That's another neat feature of this kind of watercraft. Where the water to land transition is uninterrupted the craft is driven up on land, avoiding wet feet and docking worries. If the

transition is steep, I just dock like a regular boat and the craft floats there until I return. I had brought some lightweight lawn chairs so we arranged ourselves comfortably on the gravel bar with bottle water and snacks.

We were situated at the entryway of Craig Creek to the James River with the Rte. 220 bridge to our left. The river here was about 75-100 yards wide, flat water, and popular with fishermen. As Andy and I pondered life and traveling upriver so easily, five canoes moved from left to right in front of us. There were four canoes with two young boys per boat, the fifth containing an adult male in a scout uniform. We had arrived just in time to witness the late summer migration of a native scout troop. Some of the canoes propelled by the young navigators seemed to have a destination different from the passengers' wishes. The scoutmaster delivered directions to his charges and we could tell they tried to comply, but with varied results. Perhaps they would reach their destination before the scoutmaster lost his voice.

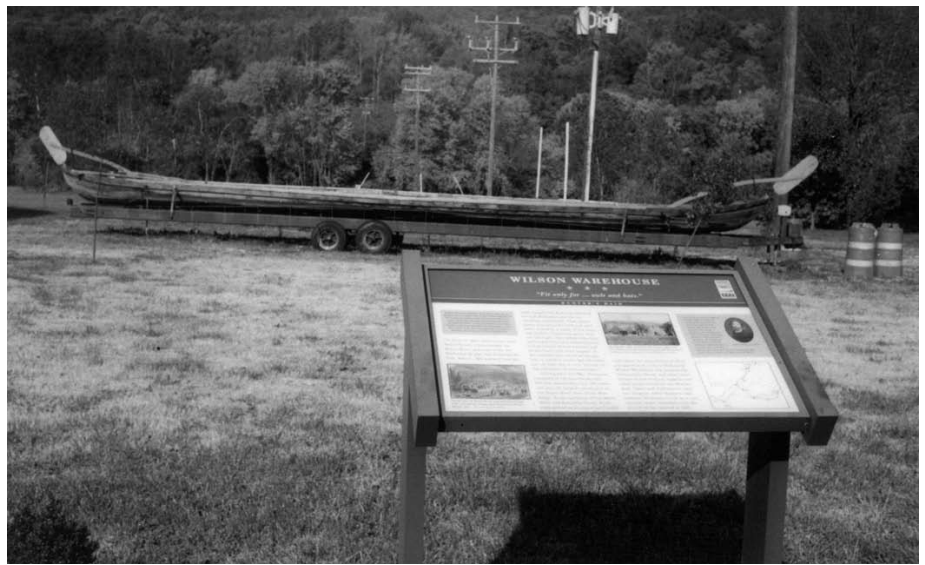
Andy and I folded our chairs and, like the day's sunlight, sped south back down the rapids to Buchanan. The scenery from Eagle Rock to Buchanan is a beauty to behold. After passing the town of Eagle Rock we plunged into an area devoid of houses and manmade construction. In the winter, with the leaves off the trees, the rail bed of CSX is visible on the left bank and, in some places, can be seen in the summer months. People seem to live along the river but most of the houses are shielded from view by hills or forest. The river is an ideal float trip for canoes and kayaks with some of the best small mouth bass fishing in the state. One fisherman I talked to said that muskie were in the deeper pools but were hard to catch. This is the fabled fish of a thousand casts.

Traveling downriver we passed the same canoes we saw on the way upriver. They were drift fishing, moving slowly with the current and in the still 1/4-mile stretch had to paddle to make it to their take-out point. Running a hovercraft on a river has a distinct advantage for where you launch is where you take out, needing only one vehicle instead of two. Finally we rounded the bend and the state game boat ramp came into view at Buchanan. After we had run the craft up on the trailer, Andy commented that if I needed someone to go with me on another trip to call him and he would like to go.

My hovercraft has opened up many possibilities for me as Virginia has a large number of beautiful rivers to explore. Over the years I have been in all kinds of boats and built seven of Phil Bolger's designs from paddle to sail to motor but nothing compares to running a hovercraft on a river. To actually go up river and back down again with ease, economy, and comfort is unbeatable. The hovercraft is just another way of moving on the water. To each his own, the old lady said as she kissed the cow.

Specifications for the Webber Star Cruiser: Two engines; lift engine 10hp Tecumseh, thrust engine 25hp Kohler. Both engines are used on various lawn mowers and industrial applications. Hull: Pink construction foam covered with fiberglass cloth embedded with epoxy resin 15' long and 7' wide. Skirt: 18oz vinyl material. Weight: 650 lbs. Six-gallon gas tank with a range of about 50 miles. On the James River I got about 10mpg.

Websites for hovercraft: Sevtec, Universal Hovercraft.



This is not how it's supposed to be. And I know that because we've seen them a thousand times, manfully crouching astride the helm of their Olsen 36s and C&Cs and Island Packets, spray glistening off their Henri Lloyd Gore Tex foulies, offering gentle encouragement to their sea-hardened yet responsive deck crew, popping and dousing colorful billowing sails with ease and laughter, rounding marks with Bolshoi precision, dazzling the awestruck race officials and other captains with their knowledge and use of racing etiquette and courtesy, and after coasting to a relaxed victory, hosting the entire crew to a grand feast at The Galley for a job well done!

At least that's how it looked from the searing metal seat of my AlumaCraft 14 as I watched the races through the years while drifting for fluke at odd weekends in the Bay. How absurd, thought I, how can you race at 5kts? Heck, my Evinrude 9.9 could whip them all if I could just get that other cylinder to fire. Just look at those snotties, probably lawyers and such, with boats named *Fame*, *Beatnik*, and *Blue Meanie*. But none of this helps me now.

Just now I am holed up in the soggy cockpit of a 40-year-old sailboat in a municipal slip in my clammy chinos and dripping flannel shirt. My crew has mutinied, carried off anything of value, and now is angrily fuming about on the dock waiting for me to disembark to almost certain personal injury. Without question my wife, a senior crew member, will not be pleasant to me for several weeks and won't say my name without spitting on the floor. A Sicilian thing. Her friend, also a crew member, is searching the phone book for a motel and muttering incantations under her breath.

My brand new 155 genoa has a 1'2" rip in the luff, it is past 2200 hours, still raining, the restrooms are closed, and I have to report my finish by phone, for cripes sake, as the race committee abandoned their post at 2000 hours. I can hear the glasses cheerfully clinking in the clubhouse just down the road, toasting the winners. So why aren't we there? Set a bit, shipmate, and bend an ear.

The *Adele M*, Ariel hull #199, has owned us since 1993. She lured us, through a "friend", to a murky, distant marina where she shanghaied the pair of us, paid off the former, and took us home. We've been good slaves, we have stripped and recaulked her teak deck seams, reseated her fittings, painted up her faded deckhouse, and mostly shined, polished, and worried over her. We doubled her lines in high weather, scrubbed her bootstripe regularly, and kept a log of every voyage she took us on.

Made the wife terrible jealous, she has, and like all comely dames she needs center stage and usually gets it. The two of them ladies, over the years, have hammered out a scheme to share me, loosely by seasons that seems to satisfy them a little, but they both still grumble. Yet we have, somehow, managed to string together many years of great day sailing and our Ladyship has treated us well. Until last year, when she threw us a leadline and veered hard apart.

That summer the *Adele M* decided she wanted to race again, as she had done in some past lives. Seems like since we were the first to plant a name on her stern, she figured we owed her or somethin' and said we should step lively. Aye then, Mum, race it is, and a few keystrokes later we had a shiny

A Racy Story

By Dan Maliszewski

new PHRF rating which we gave to the nice race official and motored out to the start line with soaring hopes and a fouled bottom.

As we putted out of the marina and into the river, a few hundred yards from the start line and with easily ten minutes to spare, we stroked each other with much boasting of kicking that one's or this one's stern. Our new club and class pennants were both flying, one clipped on each opposing shroud, and the Hoist the Main order rang out from the captain, me.

After a few minutes of mastside antics and still no main, the tiller bound captain unhappily discovered that the wire main hall-yard shackle was nicely latched to the mast winch clutch handle and pulled tight, eliminating all hope of winch drum release and main sail erection. The cap'n flew from the helm and, with the strength of Hercules, ripped the cable loose, along with his left thumbnail, and returned, bleeding, to the helm where, with a malevolent gesture, he ordered the raising of both sails in random order. Steady, shipmate, there's more...

We then found ourselves in irons, cross-current in a 17kt crosswind, being slowly carried by the tide toward the start line. The real fun part was that 18 other boats were flogging back and forth along the line as well and their classes started before ours, and they were much bigger and spendier and way more squinty-eyed than us, but I still can't see to the left, I mean port, from behind that big flapping sail, so come about starboard, no port, get those sheets out of the water, lean under the sail and look for traffic, and who forgot to lift the fenders?

So now we are a Circus Boat, motoring upstream for dear life away from the raging pack, sails luffing, fenders dragging, and all the while hearing senseless hooting of horns, raising and lowering of arcane and obtuse flags and "shapes", not one of which even faintly resembled the start sequence in the sailing book. Once clear of the mob we took inventory and found that both our new pennants were now on Davy Jones' chartroom wall.

Those black clouds overhead didn't seem quite so bad and most of the boats had cleared out, so we turned downstream, killed the motor, and hauled in the sheets. Quite naturally every other boat had started and were pulling away, including the one with two of every kind of animal and three sand barges, but our spirits were high as we approached the magical Start Line. After all we're only, what, 15 minutes late? In 15 minutes I can barely take a cr... hey, isn't that the line? Yay! We're started, now we kick some... what's that whooshing sound?

Ninety seconds over the line we are hit with a 30kt squall from the northeast, the worst kind. Of course, we are sheeted in tight so over we go to 35 degrees heel. Everything in the portside cabin shelves is now on the soleplate, which was okay since our only dry clothes quickly soaked up all that nasty bilge water. The rain is now a living thing and is giving me a fierce wedgie under my ripped vinyl rainpants. My crew, bless them, is on deck and thanking me for suggesting we go racing. But they hung tough, eased the sheets, and we started moving again. But to where?

Now the Race Committee, all former KGB operatives, cunningly displays the secret race course marks for all to see on a crisp new index card in #3 lead pencil, which they pin to the outside of the clubhouse rooftop cupola at elevation 156 for a generous 21 seconds before race start, after which it self ignites. So we figure we will just stealthily follow the other boats until we catch up and pass them. The fog, however, disagreed.

As we approached the first mark, a 60' steel plate lighthouse from the Civil War era which was the only object on the Bay older than our boat, there were no other watercraft anywhere in sight. We had 20kts of wind, rain streaming off the sails into our pockets, no marks save one, fog and nightfall. I did think to program all the club marks into my new GPS in advance as waypoints, but still no course.

Suddenly the unthinkable! One of the racers broke radio silence and divulged the race course marks to his friend on the air! The blundering infidel had given us the marks, albeit by accident. And we were off, rounding that mark with an accidental jibe that set new acoustic and seismic records in four counties.

Now we were on the downwind leg in the dark and rain and, as I set wing and wing, all hell was sounding back aft. My bride, who had enlisted the aid of the crew, was disparaging the captain's choice of rig, stating that now I made us lose the wind by hooking that stupid pole to the sail and why didn't I just heave it overboard and stop fooling around. I tried to explain the idea of apparent motion, moving at the speed of the wind and basic geometry, and ended up screaming some vile truisms like, because I'm the #%&@ captain, that's why, to the accompaniment of loud guffaws from the crew of some sailboat that had meantime sneaked up on us in the fog and who ghosted past us snorting and gargling on their way to the Victory Ball.

The next mark was uneventful, except that I learned that you cannot come about with your jib wing still set to windward because it backwinds you all the way to China, (much laughter aft), and you have to remember to ease your topping lift after you hoist the main unless you are using it as a sunshade or a big ol' noisemaker. And I did remind the increasingly surly crew that the proper reply to the command "Ready About" is not "Whatever."

At the final mark, known locally as the Widowmaker, it happened. Right square in the middle of executing one of our now famous upwind directional changes, the genny just didn't seem to be crossing quite as lively as it had been. One possible reason could have been the hot dipped galvanized Danforth crossbar jutting through the wet Dacron, the one near that new 12" tear. And do ya think my bride chose that exact moment to restate her suggestion to remove the anchor mount from the bow pulpit?

Naturally I expressed my choice for a new and much more personal location for that device as I splashed forward to unfurl my injured best sail. Since she had not quite heard me, our crew helpfully filled in the details for her and we were thus able to discuss that and many other historical family incidents and gaffes long thought dead by me, but obviously still quite alive, at near 89 decibels, on the water, in a sailboat race, going downwind slowly 'cause I had once again lost the wind thanks to that stupid pole.

We were still inexorably closing in on the finish line, only now in a stony silence with sails bent ever so slightly making 2.1kts against a 1.8kt tide. During lulls we saw how sailboats can actually go backwards and still retain steerage, as well as how time can appear to stand still, how captains slip into madness, and other amazing racing phenomena. My crew used this time to come up with a new storage location for my spinnaker pole, which they thought was quite hilarious, but I doubt the AMA or the race committee would approve.

The Sailing Instructions said that we should shine a light on our sail numbers if we were approaching the line in darkness so the kommissars could log us in. I did not appreciate the gales of laughter from my goforsaken crew as I applied my trusty .08 candlepower Navy surplus flashlight to the mainsail numbers. Maybe they had noticed that the timing tower was long vacant, with only the ghost of Morgan the pirate to catch my signal, while I inwardly contemplated why it is that men ever, ever, go down to the sea in ships.

Just when my gloom was complete, a misguided puff hardened our dacron and shoved us across the line with an elapsed time mark destined to be posted, complete with graphics, on the restroom wall for months to come. Nevertheless we had Finished the Race and it was the work of an instant to drop all sails, slap on sail ties, start the engine, and head in to the slip. Our landing was quite hot, due in part to the strong following tide, my foul mood, and a complete lack of fenders at the rail, and also because my crew of mutineers, who were now holding some sort of job action on the advice of their attorney, refused to launch the fenders or tend the lines.

But tie up we did, using my thin library of hatchet knots, and I surveyed the blunt trauma damage to the hull as our floating dock decking is made of lightweight concrete, which we all know is somewhat incompressible in collisions. I thought the hull would last the night, wondering silently if I would fare as well as the crew was turning quite ugly and was now conducting some sort of tribal ceremony with drums, little dolls, long pins, and lots of firewalking. They even have a tiny spinnaker pole, or something like it, neatly skewered with a thousand pins. Yikes. I have to drive home with these two.

So here I sit, soon to be calling in our time to the Politburo. I do not blame the crew, buggers that they are, for being testy. This racing business is not for the faint hearted. I do not blame myself, 'cause as we know, all captains are infallible. I don't even blame the weathermen for not running the right storm model software and letting that huge squall get through. In fact, there just is no blame. It is only a damn race. And that, shipmate, is how I came to be here on this dismal night.

For her part in all of this, the *Adele M* is smiling. She got to race again and it's got to feel good. She tolerated our foibles and sailed on, sometimes despite the crew and me. I'm pretty sure she loves us and wants us to race some more. She even promised that if we practice hard and buy her a new Harken traveler, next year we will show our stern light to a plethora of hot shot boats. I'm not convinced, she may be lying just to get the hardware.

PS: The infidel who slipped us the marks? He was forced to finish the race with his Henri Lloyds around his ankles. Tough bunch Back East.



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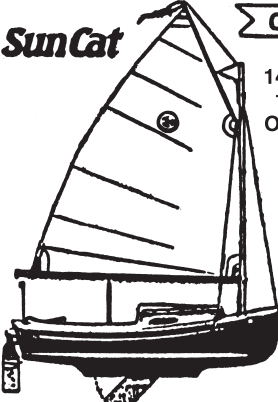
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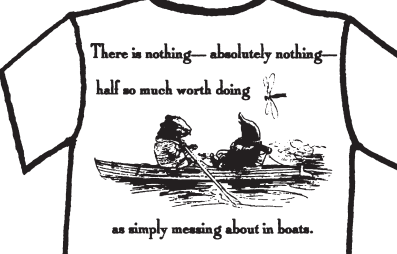


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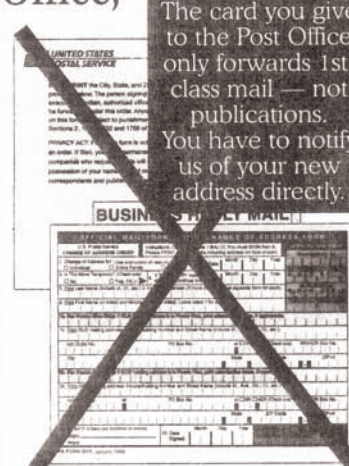
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In accordance with a verbal order of the Commodore, on Monday morning, May 28, the various yachts were in line off Portland's Custom House Wharf at 9:00am and, after waiting for some who evidently did not consider punctuality a cardinal virtue, finally effected a start at 10:00am. The following yachts participated, viz:

Sloop Princess (Com. Thomas); sloop *Viva* (V. Com Paul); schooner *Ray* (Ex. Com. Smith); schooner *Vif* (Capt. Thomas); schooner *Nellie* (Capt. Bradford); schooner *Rambler* (Capt. Stanwood).

Besides the above named, a number of yachts belonging to the fleet accompanied as far as White Head Passage and then were obliged to return to the City, much to the regret of their owners.

There was a fine breeze from the south and the day was magnificent. The Commodore's orders were to rendezvous at Cape Small Point, our further destination being undecided. The fleet arrived at Small Point in the following order, viz. *Ray*, *Viva*, *Princess*, *Vif*, *Nellie* and *Rambler*. The four leading yachts arrived within few minutes of each other, at a few minutes past 12 noon. The *Nellie* and *Rambler* being farther behind their times were not taken.

It being about dinner time we on the *Viva* naturally supposed that we were hove to for dinner and the steward was directed to set the table. But to our surprise, at about the moment our table was fairly set, the *Princess* filed away, ordering the fleet to do the same, and as we did not wish to be last, we immediately complied to the great detriment of the steward's crockery which went to leeward with a crash and caused that worthy to make various remarks which perhaps had better be left to the imagination.

One more attempt at dinner was made, but as by this time we were well at the mouth of the Kennebec, the cross sea made the dishes go "all ways for Sunday" and it was not until nearly into the Sheepscot that we succeeded in dining, being the first yacht, we think, to spread the snowy signal to the breeze.

In the meantime the *Nellie* had run into Seguin and, disappearing into the cove on that island, came to anchor and we saw no more of her for the remainder of the cruise.

By this time it was evident that our destination was Wiscasset, and the breeze being light from the southward, the yachts stood up the Sheepscot. The afternoon was as fine as the morning. The sail was most enjoyable, the yachts, as we reached the narrower part of the river, being so near that jokes and laughter were freely interchanged. The breeze gradually died away as we approached the old blockhouse on the last bend before reaching Wiscasset and we scarcely moved. But after rounding the point a fine little flow came to our assistance and we did the rest of the distance with a dash, arriving at Wiscasset at 4:20pm.

The attention of the majority was soon turned to the wants of the inner man and the steward's call to supper, about an hour after our arrival, was joyfully welcomed. After supper, pipe or cigar for the smokers, a stroll round the town, and, in the evening, visits to the various yachts. Most of us went over to the *Princess* and were most hospitably entertained by our genial Commodore.

The next morning was bright and beautiful but without a particle of wind. The river lay like a mirror, without a ripple to break its perfect smoothness. We were all on deck

Portland Yacht Club Spring Cruise of 1877

By W. Winthrop Root, Secretary

(Transcribed from photocopy of handwritten original log entry by Kinley Gregg)

early, enjoying the beautiful morning and listening to the musical buzz and hum of the Wiscasset sawmills. Before breakfast a committee composed of one man came aboard the *Princess* bringing a large bouquet of flowers which he said was sent by a lady to our gallant Commodore, he being, as she had observed with a field glass, the handsomest man in the fleet. The Commodore bore the honors most gracefully. There were indeed some of the envious ones, who didn't get a bouquet, who openly said that the man had come aboard to sponge on the Commodore for a drink, but they were not listened to.

After breakfast a number of us accepted the invitation of Mr. Larrabee of the *Ray* and started for the point in the *Ray's* boat to visit the old blockhouse, which was well worth the trouble. We got back to the yachts but still no wind. At last a southerly breeze sprang up, we hove the anchor from its bed in the Wiscasset sawdust, and at 11:00am commenced the pretty long job of beating down the river with a light breeze.

After getting nearly down to the spindle some two or three miles below Wiscasset, the first accident of the cruise occurred. The *Vif*, standing too far over toward the eastern shore on the starboard tack had the misfortune to run onto Merrill's reef. There was nearly an hour more of the flood and all hands set to work with a will to get her off. Opinions were divided as to whether it were better to pull her over the ledge or to pull her back, the ledge being so small that nobody seemed to know exactly how it ran. At first we tried to pull her over and the writer, with a number of others, had the pleasure of roosting on the bowsprit for some time to bring her down by the head. We got a hawser ashore and fast to a tree, which we succeeded in pulling down after a few sways on the hawser. After pulling down all the trees within reach on that side of the river, the tide began to ebb and we were forced to forego our exertions for the time, and when the water was down to low water mark the *Vif* was high and dry and hauled way over to port. Berths on the port side 150% premium.

The *Rambler* having continued down the river, the other three yachts came to anchor in Colby's Cove, about a mile below the reef, to wait for the high tide at midnight. After supper we went up in the tender to where the *Vif* lay and found most of the crew placidly engaged in digging clams, and Micawber-like, waiting for the tide to turn up. The *Vif* did not seem to be much injured, her shoe being somewhat wrenched but her timbers perfectly sound. The evening was spent in singing and waking the echoes which, at this point, are particularly fine. At about midnight, taking advantage of a very high tide, the *Vif* was successfully got off, but as the writer was fast asleep at the time in his berth on the *Viva*, the *modus operandi* was unknown to him.

The next morning we were on deck before 4:00am to take advantage of the remainder of the ebb and get down the river

as far as possible. There was not a breath of wind and a dense fog, or river mist, made everything cold, wet, and nasty. The writer remembers his share of hauling up the anchor that morning as a decidedly unpleasant piece of business. Colby's Cove, where we were anchored for the night, seemed to possess the advantage of having more different currents to the square inch than any other piece of water on the globe.

The preceding night we had taken the precaution of mooring stem and stern, and in the morning when the anchors were weighed and the moorings cast off, the various yachts began to gyrate round in the most bewildering manner, head first, tail first, broadside on, and quartering, and getting entangled one with the other in the most lively fashion. One would get in an eddy inshore and go whooping up the river, stern first, then come charging down and make things lively round the starting point. Another would waltz round and round in a circle, making snatches at the rigging of the others with her jib boom and bringing away a bite here and there but not making a foot of actual distance. The various comments on these performances would have very effectually dammed the widest river on the continent. However, at last we managed to work clear and drifted slowly down the stream.

About 8:00 the fog blew off, and after drifting 'til about 9:00 we met the flood, but by the aid of a very light breeze we managed to hold our own. Half an hour or so later the breeze freshened, blowing up the river, and we commenced beating down. All but the *Ray*, she being about quarter of a mile astern of the rest the breeze didn't quite reach her and she occupied her time as a sort of impromptu and involuntary ferryboat, visiting each shore a number of times alternately, but doing little more than hold her own on each tack. The rest of the fleet, more fortunate, proceeded gaily down the river, the breeze freshening steadily, and all hands happy. The *Viva*, although the last boat off, bore the honors of the day, beating the rest of the fleet fully 10 miles dead to windward.

About halfway between Small Point and Mark Island we were signaled by the *Mary*, Captain Peters, having on board Vice Commodore Paul, who had been unable to go on the cruise, and numerous other members of the Club. The program for the cruise had been to leave Wiscasset on the morning of the 29th and join the balance of the fleet at Potts Harbor and devote the 30th to a general cruise in the bay. But the unfortunate accident to the *Vif* had delayed us, we had lost the 29th, and the party waiting for us at Potts, not knowing of the accident, had been steadily roosting on the various ridgepoles round Harpswell anxiously watching for the familiar topsails to show round Small Point.

We took Vice Commodore Paul and part of the party of the *Mary* aboard the *Viva* and filled away for Harpswell, which we reached about 3:00. Here we were joined by the *Princess* and *Vif*, the *Rambler* having arrived before. Several of the yachts of the fleet from the City were also there and all the crews, especially of the cruising yachts, were glad to sit down to a bountiful dinner of which repast not the least important part was the "3-1/2%" most thoughtfully brought down by our vice commodore.

At 5:00, by which time even the hungriest of us were satiated, we weighed anchor and started for home with a light breeze from

the southeast which increased a little after rounding Deer Point, giving us a pleasant run 'til we got about opposite G.E. wharves, when the breeze died out and the yachts drifted slowly to their respective moorings, which we reached about 9:00pm.

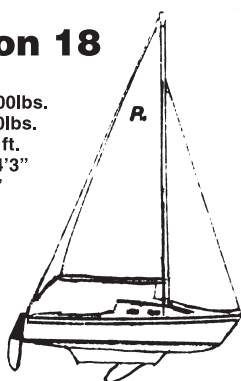
Thus ended the Spring Cruise of 1877, a cruise which was throughout thoroughly enjoyable, marred by no accident (except the slight casualty of the *Vif*), and which will long have a place in the minds of the participants among their pleasantest memories.



Precision 18

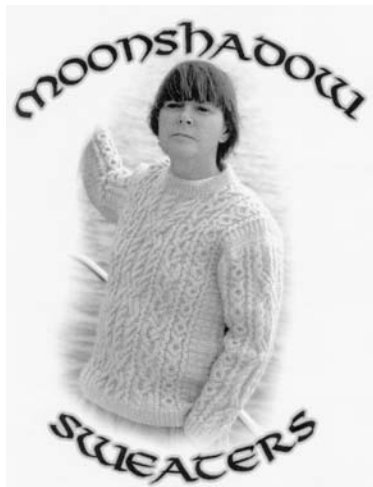
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Of Charts and Hauling Techniques

Here I'll say a word or two about what kind of charts were most useful to us. The most important thing was knowing where the landable beaches are located, like the one we were seeking at Bernabe rocks. These were as important to us as the anchorage is to the yachtsman. Knowing a place to land was just ahead, we could set forth confidently on a late afternoon sail. Fortunately we had a kayak chart showing the good beaches for the first 80-mile stretch. We missed this information on the last half of the trip where we had to do our best to guess where the beaches would be from our topographic maps and sailing charts. We had good yachtsman information in Gerry Cunningham's cruising guide (Gerry's website is also a source of kayak charts) but, although this covered the few anchorages we passed, it did not indicate the beaches in between the anchorages.

At Bernabe rocks our cruising information for big boats had us heading way off shore to clear the dangerous reef. In *Loon*, which draws a mere couple of inches with her centerboard up, we sailed right over the top of the treacherous reef, running a tidal riffle like a small rapid in a river. True, we held our breath and wore our eyeballs out making sure there were no breakers to chew us up, but we cleared it fine on the evening light.

Naturally a good beach cruising boat should have very shallow draft, inches, I think, with board up. I almost bought a Drascombe longboat instead of *Loon*, until I learned that her draft with the centerboard up was still pretty substantial. I'm still curious about the Drascombe and whether we would like it as much as *Loon*. The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) uses Drascombes to beach cruise this same coast, so they must be well suited. I'm guessing they would be drier and safer but also much heavier and cumbersome with less flexibility for landing options. We camped in a number of places that required *Loon*'s very shallow draft to access.

Our landing at Bernabe rocks is a good place to describe how we hauled out *Loon*. This was the first camp where hauling was

The Art of Beach Cruising

Observations from a Three-Week Baja Odyssey

Part 2

By John Sperry

mutually decided as being necessary. The cobble and sand beach at Bernabe afforded virtually no protection, except partially from the north because of the reef. Strong winds from any direction would threaten our open boat at anchor and make us uneasy.

Our well-practiced procedure was as follows. First we heave to and anchor the boat near shore and one of us swims ashore to reconnoiter a haul-out spot. This requires a smooth beach plus a sturdy anchoring point for the rope, a big rock, a pile of rocks, a sturdy shrub, or the post of a fisherman's shack. We have a 200' rope, plus more to add on, because sometimes good anchor points are hard to find. At Bernabe I found a nice big boulder by a small outcrop along the wild beach.

Back at the boat we furl the sails and row to the haul-out spot. We anchor again as close to shore as the surf will permit and wade the gear ashore, including masts. After unloading I tie one end of the haul-out rope to the anchor point and to its other end at the shore I clip the 4:1 rope-and-pulley system that will attach to *Loon*. This system has two double pulleys, and from experience we learned that each double pulley should be flat with a smaller pulley in front of a larger one, rather than two equal sized pulleys side-by-side. The flat pulleys keep the four ropes that run back and forth in one plane so that they don't twist up into a hopeless mess with all the friction of rubbing against one another. There's a cam cleat on one of the pulleys to hold tension between heaves on the line.

The boat is rowed stern first to the shore through whatever surf is up. Quickly the pulley system is clipped into a rope tied across

the transom and the first heave-ho hauls *Loon* out stern first. Also quickly, a second person places one of three portable boat rollers under the stern. As the heave-ho continues, the second and third rollers are added, and as she is hauled yet further up the beach, rollers freed at the bow are carried back to the stern.

Work gloves are useful. Our rollers are made from two cylindrical boat fenders tied end-to-end with a length of rope. We haul stern first because if you don't the bluff transom faces the incoming waves which slop right overboard and throw the boat all over the place. *Loon*'s transom is very sturdy with two tie-off points at either corner that can withstand the stress of a haul-out.

Smooth Sailing

Over the next five days we had very fine sailing, a pleasant theme with variations. We always arose before the sun, around 6:00, and were eating our ritual breakfast of instant oatmeal and instant coffee while the orb rose over the gulf. Water was calm with a nice land breeze and we generally were off before 7:30. We are not normally morning people, but the October days were short and when you go to bed by 9:00pm (after a 6:00pm sunset), getting up at 6:00am comes easy. A highlight of the trip was to sleep and rise with the sun, see the dawn, and to sail along the coast in the early light.

A calm would set in before noon and we would sometimes go swimming off the boat or fish and be entertained by sea lions and jumping manta rays and dolphins. The scenery continued to be outstanding with range upon range of jagged mountains lining the coast and the stately cardon cactus on the bajadas. The air was not hot, high 80s generally, occasionally in the 90s, but a far cry from the broiling sun of summer down here. The skies were cloudless.

The midday calms were soon followed by a north breeze that would build to 15-25mph depending on the day. Although I didn't have an anemometer (which would be interesting to take) I'm guessing that we were comfortable sailing *Loon* at up to 20mph, with the 10-15mph range being ideal. A chop with small whitecaps was fine going. With these breezes we ticked off the miles quickly. Our top GPS speed was 7.7mph in a williwaw, but I know we zoomed faster than this on occasions too frantic to check the GPS, we frequently traveled over 5mph and daily averages reached 4.5mph. This was with winds generally behind us at some angle or other.

The motor was not used, except once for fishing after making camp. Again, I can't compare these speeds with other boats but I thought they were pretty respectable, especially given our heavy load and small boat. It's probably pretty important to have a reasonably fast boat. We covered our miles by midday if not earlier and had fine camps on broad sandy beaches and once in a very fine cove (one of two Caletas Mujeres).

Fishing was almost too good for spotted bay bass and trigger fish and we dined on fish either fried, grilled, or in soup. Snorkeling was endlessly entertaining although the water was a bit cooler than we expected. The evening's entertainment, besides happy hour, of course, was watching the phase of the waxing moon, checking on the evening star in the west, or watching Mars appear over the eastern horizon.



Lynn showing how the haulout's done, heave ho and a Jimadour sour

Loon safely hauled at Bernabe rocks. Sierra de Agua de Soda marching south



A couple of 10-mile stretches of very rugged coast along the Sierra Agua de Soda and Sierra Sirena (Mermaid Mountains) were put behind us where landing was limited. These parts always made us nervous because, should the wind suddenly come up as it can do, we needed to know the nearest bail-out spot. If one were not at hand we would have to ride it out. Fortunately nothing like this happened but it didn't keep us from looking over our shoulders constantly!

During this time we re-supplied with six gallons of water at the hamlet of Bahia San Francisquito and whizzed past Rancho El Barril where the old ships used to take on water from a well in the arroyo. Fisherman have a village at the landing and, in stark contrast to their humble dwellings, up coast a bit there were two or three incredible mansions, one of which belongs to Zsa Zsa Gabor's clan. The rich folks fly in to a near-by dirt airstrip. What a getaway spot.

"El Ultimo" and Beyond

Once beyond El Barril we were really on our own and it was during the next five days that we saw no one on or off the water. "El Ultimo," the salts at LA Bay told us of El Barril, "the last," meaning the end of any contact or fresh water, not that the coast before this was exactly populated but we did see pangas going to and fro several times a day. After El Barril, not even a panga was spotted.

In keeping with the remote setting we managed to get involved with some tricky weather for the next four days. Mare's tails ahead of a front ushered in more clouds that crowded the usually clear skies and the wind shifted from our north breezes to southern ones which increased to stiff (25-30mph) winds and stalled our progress. We moved each day but sometimes only five miles or less, usually in the morning. We anxiously tried to read the skies, recalling various weather lore such as "red sky at morning, sailors take warning" and "mackerel skies and mare's tails make tall ships carry low sails," both of which were accurate.

We should have brought a barometer and a radio capable of receiving the weather broadcasts out of San Diego that the yachts at Puerto Don Juan were receiving. We also wondered if a satellite phone wouldn't have been good for peace of mind. Our only way of contacting anyone was a marine line-of-sight VHF which was nearly useless except for entertainment around the one marina we passed later at Santa Rosalia. Our other gadget was a GPS which was a convenience rather than a necessity.

Tacking was required to round some very low, but annoyingly prominent points with their tide-influenced mystery water. When the wind came SW off the land we had to deal with wicked williwaws funneling over the mountains and swooping out of the arroyos. This required a hand on the main-sheet for quick alterations of sail angle, no cleating allowed.

One day after making some decent but nervous miles on a finicky SE breeze there was a calm, followed by WHAM, an instant SW 35mph onslaught complete with an instant froth of white caps. By a stroke of luck we were near a rare cove and zoomed in at lightening speed. Guess we'll camp here! Through all the tense sailing *Loon* hardly shipped a cup of water and we only used the motor twice to beat tidal currents off a low point and to gain shore for a time-out against ugly williwaws.

By the end of this somewhat trying period we had reached Punta Trinidad and its beautiful curve of beach. As usual we were the only ones in sight. We enjoyed a lot of treasured solitude on the trip, one reason we usually travel just the two of us even though it is more dangerous that way.

Punta Trinidad marked a transition from relatively low shoreline of rugged hills with bajada aprons of cobble and sand to a shoreline of truly impressive mountains and cliffs. We were nearing the region of the three volcanoes, La Reforma (4,265'), El Azufre (5,446'), and Las Tres Virgenes (6,365'). These rugged hulks achieve their altitude despite being just a few miles inland, making for the trip's most spectacular and intimidating shore. To take a look at the next several day's challenges we hiked over the sand hills of Punta Trinidad in the stiff afternoon breeze.

What we saw has entered my personal pantheon of unforgettable wilderness views. They are unforgettable because they inspire both fear and awe. The coast as far as could be seen was all mountains and cliffs with not a landable beach in sight. The broad Valle Azufre (sulfur valley) swooped down from Tres Virgenes and ended in crumbling bluffs, looking like a perfect wind tunnel for blasting the coast. We swallowed hard wondering if we could ever manage to get beyond this to Santa Rosalia given the tricky weather we'd been having. But we kept our fears to ourselves and strolled back to happy hour, on the way back spotting a neat orange-spotted snake eel stranded by the low tide.

The next day, however, was probably the most perfect sailing day we had. The southern weather we'd been having (probably part of a passing cold front) was gone. Underway by 7:20 we rode a wonderful north breeze under clear skies for 15 miles down to Bahia Santa Ana. On the way we passed the Sierra El Caracol (Snail Mountains) and, although landing sites were minimal, there were some cobble beaches here and there that looked landable if the weather got up.

As we sailed in to stop for the day at Santa Ana's sandy beach we started rolling over some rather large swells from the north. Hmm, we wondered, what did this mean? These swells came crashing right in on the beach, which was a shallow one, so we had to negotiate several lines of breaking waves in our usual unloading and hauling procedure. We had a full moon that night and, as the higher than usual tide came in with the big swells, it sounded like we were camped on the Pacific coast.

I got up in the middle of the night, looked out the mesh door of our tent, and gasped, the waves looked like they were going to come roaring right through the door. We both got up and moved the tent back and hauled *Loon* even higher. We were very glad that she was high and dry and not tossing wildly about at anchor far off beyond the surf line. These big swells had us baffled a bit, we could only conclude that the north wind must be howling up at LA Bay. Later we learned it blew for a solid week up there.

(To Be Continued)



Gorgeous beach fronting an abandoned resort south of San Francisquito.



Cove camp one day beyond El Barril.

The wild beach inside Punta Trinidad looking north.



My sailing training consisted of one ten-minute lesson from my sister-in-law in her Sunfish on Lake Ontario. A few years later I mail ordered something made of Styrofoam with a little sail. I sailed it on a small lake in Kansas. I got a lot of experience putting it back into a mast-up attitude in the Kansas winds. I actually bent the mast when I pried it out of the lake bottom one day. A year later we were in the German Alps.

One warm weekend we took a trip to the Armed Forces Recreation Center (AFRC) resort on the Chiemsee. AFRC had a nice little fleet of sailboats on that lake. I went to the rental booth and asked to rent a boat. "Do you have a license?" was the water patrolman's response.

It turned out that to rent a boat from AFRC you first had to pass two tests, a written test and a practical (sailing) test, just like getting a driver's license. I took the written

On the Job Training

By Palmer McGrew

test and passed it easily, but now I was told that I would have to wait until a boat became available. Considering that all the boats were reserved for the rest of the afternoon, this was probably not the best day to try to take the practical test.

My wife and one daughter had gone with the car to visit a nearby castle. My son, other daughter, and I were pretty much stuck there until the others returned. We had expected to be sailing. Well, we might as well wait and hope someone would fail to show up for his reservation.

A young man saw us sitting around and came by to talk us into going in with him to rent the "big boat" that he had already reserved. The kids were getting pretty bored and it was apparent that I would not get to take the second part of the test that day, so we agreed to go if I could sail part of the time.

It turned out that there were now seven people and one dog on the boat. The young man had a date. An older couple was going along for the ride, as was their beloved mutt. I objected to the dog. I had just taken the written test and knew that pets weren't allowed on AFRC boats. The young man wanted the couple to go, they were worth two bucks an hour to him and they wouldn't go without the dog.

We set out and I got busy learning how to use a jib, something I'd never done. As soon as I had a chance to look around and check the kids I discovered BonniJean holding tightly to the collar of the dog who was lunging and barking at the swans swimming nearby. I told her to let go of the dog. "I can't, Daddy, if I let him go he'll jump into the water after a swan," she protested. In a second or two the dog, with BonniJean still holding his collar, plunged into the water.

She was immediately pulled under the boat. I stepped to the other side of the boat and, sure enough, she popped up there. I scooped her up and pulled her back into the boat. The dog's daddy, during this time, had dived into the Chiemsee declaring, "I'll save her!" I threw him a life jacket.

Now here's the scene. A swan was swimming in that graceful, cool way that swans always do. The dog was swimming as fast as he could after the swan, barking but swallowing water on almost every bark. The man was swimming after the dog with a life jacket hooked over one arm. No one was gaining on anyone. We were sailing away.

I could feel how cold BonniJean had gotten in the few seconds she had been in the water and now I was worried about the man.

"Luff the sail," I told the captain.

"I'm going to come about and pick them up," the captain replied.

"No, luff the sail," I commanded, trusting that he would sense that I was senior to him, at least on land.

"Sir, I'm the captain of this vessel and I'll take care of it."

We sailed on, leaving the trio swimming along with occasional barking, gargling, and sputtering from the dog. Eventually the captain brought the boat around and headed back toward the man and the dog. As he approached, I sensed that this big, heavy boat was going to keep going right past them again.

"Luff the sail!" I commanded, and again the captain refused. As he got to the trio he did let the sail go but, as I had guessed, the boat kept going until it was well past them. The little scene continued, the swan swam gracefully along, the dog pursued the swan, and the man pursued the dog.

Visibly disturbed and having negated any good impression he might have made on his date, the captain made another attempt to come back and pick them up. He still overshot the trio, the boat came to rest about 50 yards away, and the swan headed someplace else.

The nearby Germans were laughing hysterically at the ineptitude of the Americans in their big, lumbering boat. Finally one of the German boats came over and scooped up the dog and his owner and brought them us. The German captain, as he sailed away, shouted, "Take a lesson!"

Our captain had promised me that he would let me sail the boat if I came along and now he was anxious to turn it over to someone, anyone, else. He was exhausted and embarrassed.

I gladly took the tiller and was surprised how easy it was to sail compared to my little Styrofoam sailboard. It was so easy, in fact, that I let Greg, who was 12, sail it for a little while. Greg handled it with ease. Then I asked BonniJean if she wanted to sail it. I really did that to show up the captain and that was, in fact, more than he could handle. He refused to allow a 10-year-old girl to sail the boat.

And, in case you don't think she could have sailed it, let me correct that mis-impression. Our last sail in the howling winds of Kansas on Styrofoam, I told Greg to make a solo run, which he did. BonniJean asked if she could and I said no. Why? Because... I was about to say "you're a girl" but I knew I couldn't, so I had to let her. She cruised around the lake and came back in as if it was no big deal.

Citing the fact that there were two wet and cold people on board, our young captain declared the sail to be over and, "You seem to be sailing it better than I was, you take it in, sir."

Whoa! Getting this big boat back into the little marina wasn't something I knew how to do. I had never even sailed a boat up to a dock. I would have to hit the little entrance just right, make a hard right turn, then, almost immediately, turn it all the way around and bring it up to the dock between two other boats. How was I going to do that? No clue!

I lined up for the entrance to the little marina, furled the jib, eased off the main, and crossed my fingers. The heavy old boat lumbered perfectly through the entrance. I swung it to the starboard, pulling in on the main sheet for a little more speed. I announced that I was coming about, pushed the tiller all the way over, and held my breath. The old boat slowly came about. As soon as it was completely around I let the sail luff. The heavy old tub wallowed to port from the momentum of the turn and kissed up against the dock exactly in its parking spot. The kids jumped out and tied it up. I sat there dumbfounded at my luck.

Everyone disembarked. The young captain and his date disappeared, leaving me to figure out how to bring the sails down. Then I went up to the rental booth and asked if any boats had become available while I was out.

"I saw you bring the big boat in just now," the water patrolman said. "Here's your license." Better lucky than good.

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The Grumman and Me

By Robert G. Torgersen

When I was about eight years old my dad bought a 17' square stern Grumman canoe for our family annual summer vacations in the Adirondacks. This canoe was built by the Grumman Aircraft Company in Bethpage, New York, before the boat construction business was separated from the aircraft business.

My dad had been a sea captain in the Norwegian merchant marine service and enjoyed small boats. An early photo of him shows him as a boy in his clinker-built rowboat in a fjord in Norway. He spent his vacations from commercial seafaring in small boats in Norway, mainly sailing with my mom. We started learning about boating and knot tying at an early age, everything had a correct knot or splice to be used. My mom also had been a seafarer, coming to this country from England via the *Joseph Conrad* as a cadet in the mid '30s.

This brings up an interesting side item, that of boat names. Our first boat, the Grumman canoe, was named *Hippen* after the square rigger that my dad shipped out on as a cadet to learn to be a seaman in Norway in the early '20s. Our next and successive small outboard runabouts were all named *Can Do* after the Chinese crew that my dad had in his Pacific merchant marine days between the west coast of the U.S. and the Far East. When asked to do a job, the crew boss's response was, "Can Do." Finally, the most recent name for several of our larger boats over the years was *Indian Girl*, named after a full rigger owned by a great grandfather in Norway in the 1800s.

We, my brother, sister and I, learned the correct way to use line, knots for various purposes, splicing, etc., to tie up boats at docks correctly, to maneuver into and away from the wind, and the rules of the road during the many summer vacations with the Grumman and in a series of other small boats. The Grumman was always present, even though we may also have had an aluminum outboard runabout on occasion. Canoeing using the various strokes for both bow and stern positions correctly was never a second thought and a skill that I continue to enjoy today, many decades later. Several years after getting the canoe, in the mid '50s, we got a used 3hp Evinrude for the canoe which extended the distance possible for travel from our various campsites to distant (for us) places in the Adirondack lakes at which we camped. This motor is still in use today by my brother on his newer Grumman square stern.

When I went away to college I used my canoeing skills to win several year's canoeing contests at the college field day events. During my time at college the Grumman went with my family and brother to Maine seacoast exploring and to Virginia along the eastern shore. After graduation, marriage, and with children and a dog, I inherited the Grumman and we continued to use it on camping trips. This time we ventured farther afield along the chain of lakes in the Adirondacks with three small children and our English Setter. We made many day trips along the streams and chain of lakes in the vicinity of Upper Saranac Lake, portaging the canoe where necessary and enjoying the wilderness.

As the children grew, so did the demand on the Grumman. We ventured to Ontario for our summer vacations, along the Rideau Canal chain of lakes. We then used a variety of small outboards from a Neptune Mighty Mite (1.8hp) to a Johnson 7.5 hp to extend the travel and fishing possibilities. About this time we got interested in sailing and I made a set of leeboards, a mast, and a rudder for the canoe, using the Grumman catalog as inspiration. My wife sewed a main sail and a jib from spinnaker cloth discarded by big boat sailors at the local boat club. The mast and boom were built using stair handrail stock from the local lumberyard. We learned to sail with the Grumman in that manner at a local reservoir in New Jersey. Canoe, rigging, children, and us in a VW with canoe on top!

As time went on we had the use of a lake cottage on Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey, where the Grumman received a storage rack and was used on weekends for puttering around the cove and for enjoying nature in all its variety on a fresh water lake. I had rowed in college and the canoe was tempting, a Piantadosi Row Wing solved that problem and fit the canoe with the removal of the center thwart. The canoe quite flew with that set-up and I could still bring my trusty Setter (each generation of Setters gets to go with me in the canoe) with me on trips around the lake.

Now the Grumman is used, in addition to my and my Setter's trips around the cove on weekends, by various grandchildren as they learn the ways of a canoe. The proper use of small boats is an invaluable skill to teach children and one which they will use forever in their enjoyment of the waters around them. The skills taught by my seafaring parents are still taught by me to all involved in our family boating. Proper boat handling, knot tying and proper line utilization in using cleats at docks, and tying up fenders are all skills taught by my parents which I continue to teach to our children and to their children with pride. All this came in most useful in over 30 years of teaching at local USPS courses also.

As much as larger boats have been available over the years, it is always when paddling the canoe with my ever-present companion that gives me the most satisfaction.

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International

A Spanish court heard a tape of Spain's director of its merchant marine ordering that the crippled tanker *Prestige* be towed offshore before its damage was even assessed in November, 2002. Out there it soon broke in half (as predicted by the salvor on scene), its oil fouled Spanish and French beaches and the fan has been overloaded ever since.

Some time ago the European Union drafted a port services directive that has faced near universal condemnation ever since. It was withdrawn after scenes in the European Parliament that were described as "almost farcial."

Enactment of the so-called "Erika II" package would mean that an increased number of defective ships will be denied entry to European Union ports. The figure would rise from about ten a year now to over 200.

Global oil additives company Chevron Oronite declared force majeure (an unexpected act, an act of God) after the Gulf of Mexico's recent hurricanes and that tipped the lubrication oil international market into crisis status. The situation has since improved but lube oils remain in short supply and additive components are still being rationed.

And the Gulf of Mexico hurricanes meant that some coffee shipments are bypassing New Orleans, long a major coffee importing port, and going upriver to Baton Rouge.

At a U.S. conference on LNG safety, one speaker noted that LNG safety studies aren't based on actual incidents because there have been so few. Another speaker said that there have been no recorded breaches of an LNG-carrying vessel. However, the first speaker cited the example of a LPG carrier (a more dangerous gas than LNG) that was hit by air-to-ground, armor-piercing rockets from an Iranian fighter plane. The crew abandoned the blazing tanker but a salvage tug used foam and water to extinguish the fire. The salvors then boarded the ship, "jury-rigged patches," and towed the tanker back to port where it was repaired and put back into service. And most of the LPG was also salvaged. LPG is heavier than air and settles on the water surface, whereas LNG is lighter than air and vaporizes away.

The Very Large Cargo Carrier (VLCC) *Elisabeth Maersk* was sold to a South American buyer and reports said it was Venezuela and the VLCC would be used to carry Venezuelan crude oil directly to China. Another Maersk VLCC may be sold soon.

Right now the world's merchant fleets are short about 10,000 officers, about 2% of requirements. And the continued rises in seafarer pay will cost many Filipino mariners their jobs when shipping companies switch to cheaper sources of labor. The average Filipino pay for an able-bodied seaman is \$1,400.

Banks may not be able to finance the volume of newbuilds in the next two years.

Hard Knocks and Thin Places

The master of the freighter *Kinei Maru No. 8* collided with the smaller fishing vessel *Kazuyoshi Maru No. 3* and two brothers on the FV died and the freighter's master was soon arrested for professional negligence.

Off southern Puerto Rico the tanker *Sperchios* went aground and was refloated without a spill.

In the Philippines, the pilot boat *Pilot No. 4* collided with the passenger boat *Cokaliong* and two had to swim for it.

Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

On a German river, the *Alexandros* collided with the *Nina I* and a seaman was knocked overboard. He was seriously hurt but was rescued and the ships were parked on a sandbank to keep them from sinking.

Off Vietnam, the 5,000-tonne Chinese *Anjin* carrying steel from Shanghai to Singapore sank and 13 went missing.

Italian authorities feared that maybe 150 or more may have drowned when a 16-metre boat carrying 200 North African illegals ran aground in Sicily.

Off South Korea the fishing vessel *97 Hangdong* collided with the Malaysian freighter *Bunga Mas Lapan* and sank, leaving 13 fishermen missing.

During a routine call of the car carrier *Dyvi Baltic* at Durban, South Africa, cracks in its rudder were spotted. Since local shipyards were fully booked, the ship waited until a cofferdam could be built to fit around its stern.

The bulk cement carrier *Margaret* dragged its anchor at La Spezia, hit a pier, and sank in shallow water.

The Moroccan-flagged ro-ro *Azzahra* dragged its anchor in the Bay of Gibraltar and went aground.

The Jamaican-flagged *Vertigo* sank after colliding with the *Ziemnia Lodzka* in the Big Belt Channel between the Baltic and the North Sea off Denmark.

On the Elbe in Germany the small *Maritime Lady* carrying fertilizer collided with the small container ship *Arctic Ocean* and capsized. The tanker *Strange Blossom* soon ran into the wreck.

The Grey Fleets

The Israeli Navy will receive two sophisticated German submarines. The German government refused to pay \$1.1 billion for their construction but did agree to finance one-third of construction costs from its household budget.

The U.S. Navy is borrowing a stealthy Norwegian Fast Patrol Boat for a year, complete with two crewmen.

Since a U.S. arms embargo has been lifted, Indonesia will buy Harpoon missiles. It also plans to buy Russian-made, longer-ranged Yakhout missiles for its two frigates and hopes to buy four to six submarines.

The American design firm Gibbs & Cox will design new destroyers for Australia and do so in Australia.

Hugo Chavez's Venezuela signed an agreement with Spain for 12 transport and maritime surveillance aircraft, four coastal patrol boats, and four corvettes. The U.S. asked Spain not to go ahead with the deal because the planes contain U.S. technology, but Spain said the deal was conducted legally. All of this equipment "is not for attacks, but for internal defense," said the Venezuela Navy's top man at the same meeting that he asked Columbia to join Venezuela in defending their region.

India has long-term plans to acquire more than 60 warships now that it is emerging as a major South Asian power. Twenty-seven warships are on order and the Navy has in-principle clearance from the government for 36 more vessels. Among the new vessels are three more Krivak class stealth missile frigates to supplement the three that

India already has and the ex-Russian aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov* will arrive from Russia in mid-2008.

India recently signed pacts with Thailand and Indonesia about conducting coordinated patrols in regional waters and India transferred a second 30-knot Trinkat class patrol boat to the Maldives plus money for various forms of assistance in an effort to "reach out to the maritime nations in the Indian Ocean Region to increase joint and mutually advantageous cooperation."

The Indian Navy's post 9/11 emphasis, it was stated, has been on low intensity conflict, electronic warfare, and sea piracy and it plans to hitch everything together with a satellite supported IT system and shore operations centers. The Indian navy recently completed joint exercises with the navies of the U.S., Russia, the U.K., and France. Other recent naval exercises in the region: Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

The U.S. Navy will close its submarine base in Sardinia. Reason? The end of the Cold War and the realities of the current security environment. The Navy is also trying to control costs so it can afford a bigger fleet, 313 ships by 2020. Although big warships are getting exorbitantly expensive, 55 of the increased numbers would be the new and smaller Littoral Combat Ships.

In the U.K., Lord Drayson's review, expected out as this column is being written, will probably call for more than £1 billion of cuts in defense numbers and capabilities to prevent further cost overruns. Most of the cuts (428 million) may come from scrapping bombs and missiles that would have been fitted to the RAF's Joint Strike Fighter that will be used on two new carriers. The review will also probably call for extending the life of some assets, such as two aircraft carriers.

And RN Parrot No. 1, the foul-mouthed African grey parrot named Sunny, has been on extended shore leave for medical reasons. It had been plucking out its feathers and was looking forlorn. Its feathers are now growing back.

A Dutch businessman has been trying to sell two ex-Dutch Navy submarines, the *Zwaardvis* and *Tijgerhaai*, to Malaysia. But the deal is not going through so the Dutch Ministry of Defense took him to court. The Ministry is afraid the subs will be seized for failure to pay port bills in Malaysia and then get into the wrong hands. Desired solution? Scrap them or bring them back to the Netherlands.

And the Dutch Navy plans to open its submarine service to women since mixed sub crews have worked out in Norway and Germany. Norway already has a female sub commander. The Dutch government's action followed the appointment of the first woman general earlier this year and it is thinking about including women in its Commando Troops Corps.

The missile cruiser *USS San Jacinto* became the flagship for a Royal Navy commodore when his nation could not supply a suitable ship for housing him and his staff while commanding Task Force 58, which protects oil platforms off Iraq. There are plans to get him a suitable British ship before he turns over command in April.

Pleasure Boats

The European Commission ruled that an Italian shipbuilder is not entitled to \$35 million in state aid that was used in the construction of the 105,000gt cruise ship *Costa Magica* for Carnival Corp.

Another floating luxury condo ship along the lines of 40,000gt *The World* and the proposed 42,400gt *Four Seasons* may emerge. The 70,000gt *Magellan* would have 200 private residences, ranging from \$1.8 to \$8 million each, and construction will start as soon as 120 units have been sold.

Missing cruise passengers have been much in the news. A Canadian woman traveling with her husband went missing off the *Jewel of the Seas* in the Bahamas. A tourist off the *Norwegian Dream* went free diving and snorkeling from the diveboat *Belize Pride* and disappeared in rough seas near Caye Caulker, Belize. And the family and widow of a honeymooning man who disappeared off the *Brilliance of the Seas* in the Mediterranean on July 5 accused a cruise company of inaction and cover-up. In the wee hours of the night people in neighboring cabins heard loud voices and noises and next morning blood was found in the cabin and outside and a bloody handprint was on the ship's hull. The wife was asleep while all this happened.

The first submarine cruise ship may be in operation within three years. The £100, million *Poseidon* would house 70 passengers in luxury staterooms while they spent time at depth observing the Great Barrier Reef and other exotic underwater sights up to 1,000' down.

The *Diamond Princess* had a bout with norovirus, that pesky gastrointestinal bug, and 58 passengers suffered but the other 2,650 passengers and 1,115 crew didn't.

They That Go Back and Forth

Irish Ferries wanted to make some economies to meet competition from low-cost airlines and excessive costs so it announced it would lay off 540 Irish seafarers and replace them with Latvians at less than half the Irish minimum wage. The Irish seafarers promptly voted for an industrial action (strike), four ferries stayed in various ports, trucking piled up, shore personnel joined in the strike, there was a national day of protest, and the national congress of unions told the government it would not enter into discussions on new social relationship or labour legislation until the Irish jobs were safe. The company tried to transfer some ferries to the Cyprus flag and then threatened to close down and, after three weeks the company and the Irish seafarers were back where everything started from.

In New York, the City is facing hundreds of millions in lawsuits resulting from the 2003 crash into a pier by the ferry *Andrew J. Barberi*, a crash that killed about a dozen people. Lawyers for the city realized that if the ferry master was responsible in any way for the crash then the city was negligent in his supervision, so the city suddenly started downplaying his role. Although the master and his supervisor had both been charged, the city now says his presence in the wheelhouse alongside the pilot who was actually doing the driving wasn't required after all but was optional at his discretion. Thus freed from responsibility, the captain is now suing the city.

Nasties and Territorial Imperatives

In the first nine months of 2005, there were only ten piracy incidents in the Strait of Malacca compared with 25 incidents in the same period a year earlier. Joint Indonesian-Malaysia patrolling got credit for the reduction. And a terrorism expert thinks that the

threat of Southeast Asian terrorism has been overplayed. But the situation off Somalia got so bad that the International Maritime Organization agreed to present the matter to the United Nation's Security Council for its action and the Somali Transitional Federal Government (now based in Nairobi) has hired a New York marine security firm to escort ships through Somali waters during the next two years. Illegal fishing will also be a target.

Japan may spend big, \$2.9 billion, in the next seven years to improve its Coast Guard so it can protect Japan's interests in gas explorations in the East China Sea.

Nature

What do you do when a sunken barge must be raised? Drain the river. The river here is the River Nene in England's East Anglia, and the concrete barge, which sank last February, is the *Lauria*. The Nene was drained between locks.

Metal-Bashing

Venezuela has signed an agreement with Iran whereby that nation will build tankers and other vessels for Venezuela and also train shipyard workers for that nation. It is one of dozens of similar agreements between the two nations. Both are part of OPEC and both are anti-American.

A ship scrapping operation may open up in Newport, Oregon, to dispose of decrepit ships from the government's reserve ship fleet in Suisan Bay near San Francisco. The yard would save the cost of towing ships through the Panama Canal to Gulf or East Coast ship-breakers.

Ship-breakers on the long beach near Alang, India, have scrapped about 4,200 vessels and much of the time they have had Greenpeace on their necks about hazardous materials and dangers to workers. Now two trade organizations there have established a solid waste disposal facility for processing much of what is left over from scrapping about 350 ships a year.

Legal Matters

The French Polynesian government is investigating a former member for his involvement in the decrepit government supply ship *Tahid Nui 4*. Due to its bad condition, it capsized in 2003, an episode that cost the lives of seven.

A tugboat engineer was carrying a box of parts backwards when he fell into the engine room and became paralyzed from the waist down. He sued his employer, saying the tug's master should have put up safety railings. The company said the engineer should have put them up. The jury awarded him about \$5 million but the judge ruled that the engineer was 35% responsible and cut the award to \$3.5 million.

A Greek shipping company will pay a \$1 million fine for concealing discharges of oil from its *Friendship*. And the ship's chief engineer and a fitter will each spend three months in jail and be on probation for three years.

Elsewhere, the second engineer of the Swiss container ship *Elena* also played fast and loose with oil discharge records. He may get five years in jail, three years of supervised probation, and a \$250,000 fine.

A British court ruled that a personal watercraft (you know, one of those pesky mosquitoes with a piddling tail of exhaust water) was indeed a ship and the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 applied in a case where

one PWC ran into another and one operator was injured. In an appeals court the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales and a second justice overturned the ruling, and now an application has been made to appeal their ruling to the House of Lords.

Odd Bits

In Scotland the Lerwick Port Authority hired a Dutch dredging firm to deepen the north mouth of the harbour, but the Shetland Islands Council took legal action to block the dredging because it wanted to build a 23 million bridge across the harbour. Now the Dutch firm is suing. Compensation may be about 2 million.

Indian shipping lines went to court to head off a strike by seafarers demanding compensation for a \$22 million loss in the Seamen's Provident Fund.

Demand for British junior officers rose sharply, a relief for many newly-qualified cadets.

P&O, one of the truly great names in shipping and ports operation and 165 years old, was purchased by the state-backed Dubai Ports World. The \$5.69 billion deal will make Dubai Ports P&O the world's third largest ports operation company after Hong Kong's Hutchinson Whampoa, and the Singapore government investment agency Temasek Holdings.

New orders for luxury yachts grew about 8% last year, so the economy cannot be too bad. Italy was the leading luxury yacht builder (260 units) and the U.S. is in second place with 85 units. But it is luxury submarines that mark the truly rich. Paul Allen (co-founder of Microsoft) has a ten-passenger sub that can dock inside his *Octopus*, at 416' perhaps the largest yacht in the world. Two Emirate oil billionaires own subs offering overnight accommodations and several other rich people have bought more modest two- or three-man subs. A Russian billionaire has a two-man sub parked beside the helicopter on his 340' yacht *Pelorus*.

Head-Shakers

A TV news anchor was interviewing his station's business reporter about the shortage of petroleum after recent hurricanes raised havoc with the Gulf of Mexico's production platforms, pipelines, and refineries. The anchor asked, "Why is the oil industry so concentrated in the region and why don't they move some of their facilities?"

With help from his son, 16, Greig Milligan operates the wee (16m or 52') Scottish inter-island freighter *Spanish John II* out of Mallaig. He was hauling 40 tons of rat poison to the Hebridean island of Canna one night when his world fell apart. The voice of an American radio operator warned him to get out of some undefined danger zone. Milligan didn't think the call was for him but the message was repeated nine more times, each time in an increasingly agitated voice. Milligan tried his radio but, "I'm new to the sea and I was on the wrong channel," so he tried shouting. Then he saw four explosions and saw four flashes of light as a warship fired warning shots across his bow. "I was in a real panic, it occurred to me perhaps they were going to shoot first and ask questions later. I was terrified they would think that we were some kind of suicide bomber." A multi-national NATO naval exercise was being run and authorities thought local skipper had been well-warned. But Milligan hadn't gotten the word.

Once in a very great while something wonderful appears that is ever so right and so hard to resist. The gunning dory has been that temptation for me, and perhaps when you explore the information here you'll understand why and feel the same excitement.

I have had the pleasure of rowing a gunning dory off and on for almost three decades and my strong appreciation for just how good the boat is has continued to spark in me the desire to put it into production. Over the years my commitments to building my Melonseed skiff and Swampscott sailing dory have always taken precedence, but now it's time to give the gunning dory its turn at being appreciated and enjoyed by others.

Designed specifically for bird hunting off the rugged Atlantic coastline, gunning dories were first built on the North Shore of Massachusetts about a century ago. They share characteristics with other true dories in that they are graceful and beautiful in their design, very efficient to row, and, pound for pound, some of the most seaworthy small boats in the world.

"The handsomest of all the pulling dories is unquestionably the long, slim, but richly curving double ender." (John Gardner). In *The Dory Book*, John Gardner, legendary boat builder, historian, and arguably the most knowledgeable dory expert ever, explains that pictures and verbal descriptions fail to "evoke the full perfection of the design. It is necessary to see, and, if possible, to row a gunning dory."

Like the other small craft built here at Crawford Boat Building, the gunning dory has a shape and sheer line to swoon over. If the expression "if it looks good, it is good" ever applied to a boat, it applies to the gunning dory. Someone recently described our gunning dory as "elegant, simply elegant."

In 1978 my friend and extremely talented boat builder, Jon Blanchard, built the first of this 15' version of the gunning dory. Jon found a very old wooden gunning dory rotting away in the woods beside a lake on Cape Cod, dragged it home, and redesigned it. Jon is one of those men with a talent and genius for creating perfect sheer lines and shapes in small boats. He built a mold for his new design and from that mold we built several of these gunning dories in the late 1970s for ourselves and a few very lucky friends. While the project eventually fell by the wayside under the pressure of other designs to build, the few that were built back then were really appreciated by their owners and all who rowed them.

In the 1980s the gunning dory was twice winner of the Oarmaster Trials, a round robin race for fixed seat traditional rowing boats, beating many of the other boats that were supposed to be much faster. In 1991 a friend of mine, David Stookey, took advantage of the seaworthiness of the design by rowing my gunning dory from Roque Bluffs, Maine, across the Bay of Fundy to Digby, Nova Scotia! Read some of David's notes at the end of this article.

Those of us fortunate folks who have had a chance to enjoy this boat since 1978 have rowed it in flat water, rough water, surf, whitewater, and strong winds and she performed capably in all conditions and with a good load if necessary. The ocean hasn't changed in millennia and the time-honored traditional dory design works as well now as it did a century ago! You may only use this boat for recreational purposes, but it will

My New 15' Gunning Dory

By Roger Crawford, Crawford Boat Building



serve you as well as it did the sporting and working watermen of previous centuries.

The first of this new generation of the gunning dory, with minute redefinition of the shape, was built and launched in May '05 and tested all last summer here around the shop on the coast of southeast Massachusetts, and also for two weeks in the beautiful and spectacular waters off the rough and rocky shores of Acadia in Maine. The performance of the boat and the function of the interior arrangement exceeded expectations.

This is the simple recipe for attainable, affordable boating pleasure. The boat is 15' loa x 3' 9" beam at the sheer x 1' 8" beam on the bottom. The (five lap "lapstrake") fiberglass hull alone weighs less than 80lbs and the finished boat (with interior, wood, and hardware) will likely weigh in at about 125lbs. The woodwork is all solid teak with 1-1/2" wide x 3/4" thick gunwales on the inside and outside of the sheer, breast hooks, bow, and stern and 7/8" thick teak seats. Fasteners are stainless steel and the hardware is bronze. The boat is equipped with three rowing stations and easily adjustable seats that allow rowing for one or two persons or rowing for one person and one to two passengers. Positive flotation is provided by foam-filled buoyancy chambers incorporated into the hull.

A few words about quality. All boat-builders tend to describe their boats using the same clichés and inevitably the word "quality." While some may, in fact, be good, there are some premier builders of fiberglass hull/wood trim small boats. Crawford Boat Building has been producing elegant fiberglass reproductions of traditional small craft since 1976 and has a well-deserved reputation for building boats at the very highest quality level. That custom will continue with the gunning dory. Each boat will be an expression of our desire to continue to practice the art and craft of boat building to those standards.

This is a simple boat. It has nothing more or less than it needs to serve you well, in a time when everyone seems to think they need "more" from their indulgences, more options, more buttons, etc. "More" often only increases the cost and doesn't provide any added pleasure, only complexity, expense, and maintenance. This boat is about "less" and, in this case, "less" is "more." With a pair of oars, a little safety gear, and some lovely shoreline to explore, you'll savor the delightful feeling of your body balancing the boat, pulling on the oars, and moving a beautiful, streamlined object through the water.

Go fishing, go exploring, go picnicking, or just give yourself and the dory a good workout. This is the simple recipe for attainable, affordable boating pleasure. It's not complicated and it only takes minutes to get afloat.

As children we soon recognized that water was just a wonderful thing to play in. As adults, one of the easiest ways to continue those pleasures is to row a fine boat and anyone can quickly learn how. Basic boating skills are often best learned in a small rowboat and, as the gunning dory can easily accommodate both an instructor and student together, it is an ideal craft to use when teaching a child, friend, or spouse primary rowing and boat handling skills. The lessons learned will be with them and benefit them for a lifetime.

One of the best features of the gunning dory is that it can be rowed by two people. While at first one is likely to think of rowing double as primarily a physical endeavor, you'll soon discover that rowing successfully in tandem with someone offers a lot more than just that. Rowing double is a lot like other good partnerships in life. It requires quiet, constant communication, anticipation, readjustment for breaks in rhythm, and the pursuit of a common goal. When two rowers hit their stride and the boat is gliding over the water with more speed and less effort, it's a grand feeling. There's nothing quite like the synchronicity of two pairs of oars nicely feathered, sliding across the water on the backstroke, and urging the boat ahead on the pull stroke.

Rowing is an environmentally responsible, non-polluting, "leave no trace" activity. There are no exorbitant fuel costs and the initial investment and annual maintenance costs are minimal compared to almost all other boating options.

The gunning dory can be pulled up on the beach above the tideline and left there to happily sit on its flat bottom and then easily relaunched. Using the hardware already fitted to the boat, it can be tied up to a dock, mooring, or running line. It is light enough for anyone of any age or gender to handle. Should the need arise, the dory will tow in a mannerly way behind another vessel at reasonable speeds.

David Stookey of Duxbury, Massachusetts, borrowed my gunning dory in 1991 and made a three-day crossing of the Bay of Fundy from Maine to Nova Scotia. The boat (and David) stood the test well and these quotes are taken from his log of passage:

"My boat for this passage has been very kindly loaned to me by Roger Crawford who runs Crawford Boat Building in Marshfield and builds those lovely Melonseeds that we see gliding around Duxbury Harbor. Roger's gunning dory is 15' long with an absolutely flat bottom and a lovely sheer. In addition to being lovely, it's very fast, having won six or seven races last summer and finished first in the Oarmaster Trials last autumn. The gunning dory's speed, compared to my old boat, will be a welcome blessing in a long passage.

"I am rowing comfortably in the late afternoon and being set up the bay by the current for another two hours. I hardly notice the rowing. That's probably good and may be due to the greater speed and more comfortable rowing position of the gunning dory over my old dory."

There are also some wonderfully descriptive notes in the log:

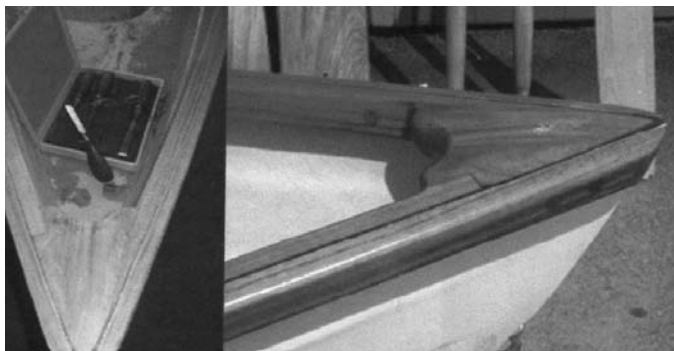
"Thursday, 8 August 1991, 0200 hrs. Wind light NW'ly. 2.5 knots made good. I

find it easier in the gunning dory to lie back for an excellent short rest. With the Milky Way over me, seals popping up here and there, flocks of sea birds sleeping on the water, I have a planetarium, aquarium, and natural history museum right here all in one.

"0300. Pass Scotch Island at 2.2 knots. Lots of shooting stars. I am steering

by picking stars directly aft but Polaris is slowly spinning my guide stars out to sea and thereby throwing me slightly off course to the south. There is a weird pinkish aid to navigation ahead, what can it be? A few minutes later it reveals itself, the new moon rising! In this setting it's a very exciting sight"

There will be only a few of these gunning dories built each year, perhaps a half dozen annually at first, from my two-man shop. If this presentation of my latest boat has caught your fancy, I look forward to hearing from you. You can reach me at (781) 837-3666 or by email at <roger@melonseed.com>



In the middle of the winter down here on the Georgia/Florida line it was cold for here... in the 30s at night and 50s in the middle of the day. Mind you, I am not whining. This is my favorite time of year, but I hadn't been in a boat for two weeks and that was unusual. The reason is not that it is too cold... I like the coast in the wintertime, but I have been busy up here in the woods. I like the woods in the wintertime, too, and I like the coast all the time, but the woods sort of lose their attraction when the red bugs, seed ticks, yellow flies, rattlesnakes, moccasins, and mosquitoes get tuned up around the end of February.

So a man just has to do what he has to do when he can stand to do it. I always try to do my logging and sawmill work in the wintertime. So that is what came to mind while I was down in the woods trying to kill another of these amazingly fat deer. I was well along in the harvesting of my limit for this year and it wasn't even Christmas yet. This little concrete shop stays about the average temperature of the season unless I heat it up, and I haven't heated it up much so it is cold enough to hang meat for a good little while and the carcasses are dangling from the ceiling all over the place in there... kind of spooky looking.

Our little redheaded granddaughter who stays here during the day is fascinated by the hand to mouth aspects of it... has watched me skin and clean quite a few so far. I bet she knows vertebrate anatomy better than any other three-year-old in this county. At this place in the first draft of this manuscript I lapsed into a long treatise on deer hunting and the natural history of deer and a long catalog of the incompetence of others in contrast with my own capability in the handling of both hunting the animal and dealing with the meat. Jane said I ought to take it out so I sought a second opinion from my oldest son... guess what?

So now let me tell you what I know about sawmills. I have always had the same trouble as any other wood boatbuilder... having a hard time finding good wood. I have a good correspondence with real boatbuilders up where building wood boats is normal and they say they have the same trouble. They can't even find good, affordable plywood anymore. Fortunately, where I live there is a lot of good timber and, back at first, there were a bunch of little peckerwood sawmills that would saw a log for you. The only trouble with that was that they wouldn't do it like you wanted them to.

I don't know what it is about a headsaw operator but they are all boneheads. All they want to do is show you what a hotshot they are and, before you knew it, your straight, pretty log is about 15 or 20 cross-grained boards half an inch thicker on one end than on the other. You couldn't get one of those old men (there were no young headsaw men in Georgia in 1963... they were all old and mean) to quarter-saw a log for anything. They wouldn't even flitch it. All they would do was square it (wasting the best, finest grain wood into four thick slabs) and cut these cattywompus boards as rapidly as they could. I mean when they turned the cant, it wouldn't even have stopped bouncing from the set works before the saw was into it.

There was this one steam mill (a fascinating thing to me) still running in Thomasville and I would have given \$50 just to run it long enough to saw my 16' poplar

Sawmills and the King of the Mountain

By Robb White

log (you know, in 1964 I painted the whole Presbyterian Church inside and out, and that included the steeple, for \$1.75 an hour and then I painted the movie theater... including the seats, for the same money, so \$50 was big money to me and to that sawyer) but he wouldn't let me saw my log and then, to add insult to injury, the off bearer threw my slabs in the firebox. I could have ripped chines and rails out of them on my bandsaw.

Speaking of which, my first sawmill was a regular 20" (still got it, Silver Mfg. Co., Salem, Ohio) bandsaw with long galvanized tin infeed and outfeed tables I had built. Believe it or not, it worked real well and I built a lot of lapstrake skiffs out of boards I ripped on it. The main trouble with it was that it wouldn't pass but 7-1/2" under the guide so I had to hew and plane (by hand) my log into a cant that thick. Except for turning all that wood into chips it really did work out pretty good. The cant had the heart in the middle of it so I popped a chalk line down the center and ripped it into two 7-1/2" thick half flitches (that's a piece of wood with bark on one edge). As I did that, the tension in the wood made the two pieces spring apart as the blade progressed down the line and those big, long pieces of wood had a good bit of rocker to them. I then ripped the heart off of each of those things just right to leave me a piece 7-1/2" to the bark. Then I ripped the bark off and had me a clear, curved cant 7-1/2" x 7-1/2." I turned that up on its rocker bottom (heart side down) and ripped my planking.

A bandsaw rips so accurately and wastes so little wood that I could usually get a 16' hull out of that. I used the two boards I got when I ripped the heart off to make the rails. I had to make the seats and transoms out of boards cut by the steam mill in town and it hurt every time to watch that saw and sawyer waste my wood. You know a 60" insert-tooth headsaw makes a 1/2" kerf even if you don't count for the wandering.

Even now that I am perfectly equipped (to my notion) I can't get planking any better than what I cut on that bandsaw all those years ago. The curve of the cant was exactly right for a lapstrake skiff, so I wasted very little wood and... here is the best part... the boards were perfectly vertical grain quarter sawn. That's how I learned to warp planks instead of having to bevel the laps. Good old Mother Nature was on my side and you know she was who taught the Vikings how plank a boat, too. Of course, they didn't have tulip poplar so they had to bevel.

I don't want to hear any nonsense from anybody quoting any nonsense from somebody else about poplar for boatbuilding unless both parties have more experience with it than I do. I have built a bunch of tulip poplar boats and, except for three cases of accidental destruction (automobile, tree, fire) they are all still good, even though back in the old bandsaw days I was building them out of young trees and using conventional methods. The sapwood of poplar is not rot resistant like old growth heartwood but 50% copper naphthanate will soak clear through a 1/4" sapwood poplar board... makes a nice green sheen through a varnish job.

I have fooled around with sawmills all my life. I have never actually wanted to own a circular headsaw but they are an admirable thing and I have worked on them a lot. I used to specialize in pouring babbit bearings in factory machinery including sawmills and planers. You know that's kind of tricky. You have to get it all lined up right, particularly on a planer and especially on a four-head planer which dresses all four sides of a board in only one pass (standing next to one of those when it is running is a good way to acquaint yourself with what the word "machinery" means). If you don't get it right the heads won't be parallel, the boards will turn out sort of trapezoidal, and the planer mill man will jump sky high. That's one reason they had to hire me to do it.

What happens is that the head wears down into the bottom half of each bearing. If it wore evenly you could just take out some shims on the caps or, heaven forbid, file the caps a little to get them to close back up on the shaft when you had already taken all the shims out. You can get away with that for a while but eventually the belt end of each head will wear more than the naked end and it'll get so it isn't running level with or perpendicular to (with side heads) the bed of the planer. It is possible to fart around and adjust the knives a little crooked behind the gibs but that makes knife changing slow and is not really correct. You remember I mentioned that sawyers are sort of headed... well, they are actually very tolerant compared to the planer mill man and they usually have two or three more fingers, too.

Oh, Lordy, Lordy, all this information. Dang. Anyway, when I was a boy there were little portable sawmills running in the woods. They were all steam driven and the boiler was on wheels. The sawmill was, too. The term "portable" did not mean that it was real convenient to set up and take down and transport like my Woodmizer so usually one of those rigs would sit in the same place for quite a while. They would find a creek and dig a hole in it so enough water would collect to feed the boiler (no sawmill around here had a condensing engine... exhausted right up the stack like a choo choo train... lifted the whole fire off the grate with every stroke when it was hot to trot). They would drag the feed pump down to the hole in the creek and hook up the steam to it and insulate the steam line by covering it with the first sawdust from the mill.

A sawmill boiler feed pump is interesting. It is a reciprocating steam pump with a steam piston driving a water piston directly with the connecting rod... no crankshaft or anything, just the two cylinders and the valve linkage. It was a real simple machine. They pumped in both directions of the stroke (double acting) and always leaked around the connecting rod seals a little bit. They didn't regulate the steam going down to the pump but just shut down the feed water with a float valve and the pump stalled and waited for the engine to use some more steam. The exhaust from the pump came out into the air down there... kind of made a new boy jump when it went back to working after the next log was loaded onto the carriage and the pump blew that puff of steam up his britches leg.

I just love steam equipment. It is so elemental and friendly for machinery. A steam sawmill runs quietly and turns the blade slowly. The blade starts out with a little sing

to it but when it gets in the wood good, it lugs down. You can watch the teeth cutting through the wood like little chisels. You know, steam engines make their maximum torque at zero rpm. The slower they go the harder they pull.

I learned a good word when I was a little boy watching with the offbearer when Gus Mitchell (Mitchell Bros. Lumber Company... brother Bill ran the planer mill) made the first cut into a real big, extra hard heart longleaf cant he had just slabbed off. As soon as the teeth hit the wood, the saw slowed down immediately so that each tooth was visible. The offbearer said, "Old som-bitch is fixing to go to work now," and it did. The big teeth pulled chunks of sawdust out the bottom of the cant that looked like the product instead of the trash. You can see the annual rings in sawdust like that. The saw just walked almost silently through the cant. As the sawyer rode the carriage by, within inches of the big blade, I could see his reflection in the shiny steel.

In the wintertime all the bullfrogs and leopard frogs in the creek would flock to the feed pump hole. The steam that leaked out of the gland and the condensate from the exhaust ran down in there and warmed the water a little bit and at night, when they shut down, all the water outside the boiler would have to be drained so nothing would freeze and bust. If the sawmill had been in the same place for a month or two salamander larvae

would be in that little pool, too. That's how I found out so much about reciprocating feed pumps... hanging around down there catching frogs and salamanders all the time.

The sawdust from the saw (there was no gang saw on those little rigs... all the lumber was cut on the headsaw) was carried by the chain chute down the hill a little bit and dumped in a sawdust pile. The boiler burned green slabs but sawdust won't burn without elaborate equipment... not even longleaf pine sawdust. It won't rot, either, and all those sawdust piles from all those little sawmills are still back in the woods. There are four on our old home place. Big buck deer love them. They like to climb up on top of them and survey their domain and prance around and show off.

Despite the fact that those old sawdust piles are around a hundred years old and are all weathered gray on the outside, if you dig down in there just a little bit, the chips from the ancient teeth of the saw look like they just left the log. They are as yellow as ever and still smell like resinous longleaf pine, too. I think that's one thing that attracts the deer. You know they love to rub the bark off aromatic bushes like cherry and sweetgum (Liquidamber) and they especially love to debark little longleaf saplings. Every big deer I ever killed had tar on his horns. I think they go up on the sawdust pile and stomp up a few fumes and get intoxicated with their own magnificence.

Hell, I used to do that same thing. I used to say, "Hot dog, I am the king of this mountain and all y'all little people down there better watch how you act around me." Of course, there wouldn't be anybody back there but me and maybe the spirits of those old dead sawmill people. You know I believe there are two sawdust piles on our old home place that nobody knows about except me. I may hobble back in there and see if I can climb up and regain a little of the arrogance of my youth. If I see a deer up there on the sawdust pile, I won't shoot him... wouldn't want to mess with the king of the mountain.

Note: If you ever think you would like to see a real little antique steam sawmill in operation, there is a primo example at the "Georgia Agrirama" in Tifton. I don't know if they run it every day or not but you could find out. It is a very interesting place. They have a whole old-time outfit with a little real farm and chickens and rats and cats and mules and fields of old-time crops... the real thing. Not only that, but they have an operating turpentine still and the operator is the real thing (if he ain't dead quite yet)... and, y'all, they have a little steam logging train and you can ride on it and the locomotive engineer will toot the whistle for you. It burns slabs from the sawmill so you can smell the old smells. They'll probably give you a handful of that sawdust from the mill and you can rub it in your hair and be the king of the mountain.



Probably 1966... OSHA bait!

Cutting off a log.



Hauling to the mill.

Woodmizer at work with power infed eight-siding a spar timber.





Smooth sailing.

Builders Bella Pierson (l) and Lisa Zygowski (r) before the iceboat's first sail.



Weight down on the bow helps to turn the Scooter.

A first push off.



A crowd gathered at Chickawaukee Lake in Rockland, Maine, on February 11 for the launching of an Apprenticeshop-built Great South Bay Scooter. After a week-long cold snap, conditions were ideal for iceboating and the weather was superb.

The Scooter, a 15' wooden iceboat, skims over the ice on four runners. She is gaff-rigged and steered by shifting body weight and manipulating the sails. The Scooter was commissioned by midcoast residents Dale Young of Hope and Ken Rich of Rockland and was built by Lisa Zygowski of Ontario, Canada, and Bella Pierson of Woodstock, Vermont, apprentices in the two-year boatbuilding program at the Apprenticeshop of Atlantic Challenge. While the 'Shop has never built an iceboat, apprentices rose to the many unique challenges associated with this project and created a stunning craft.

Lloyd Roberts of Rockport, a seasoned mariner, member of the Chickawaukee Iceboaters Club, and co-author of the iceboating book, *Think Ice*, was at the launch. He said, "This Scooter is a very specialized craft. She's hundreds of pounds of boat that handles best and is easiest to steer in a moderate breeze. While most members of the club sail and race DNs, the Iceboater's Club welcomes

Apprenticeshop Launches Ice Boat

By Trisha Badger

Photos by Tim Arruda, Arruda Photography, Rockland, Maine

anything that moves over ice." According to Roberts, the only requirements for being an ice boater are "having a high frustration tolerance, as finding good ice and good winds on weekends can be a challenge, and you've got to be a workshop person, there's always something to fix on your boat."

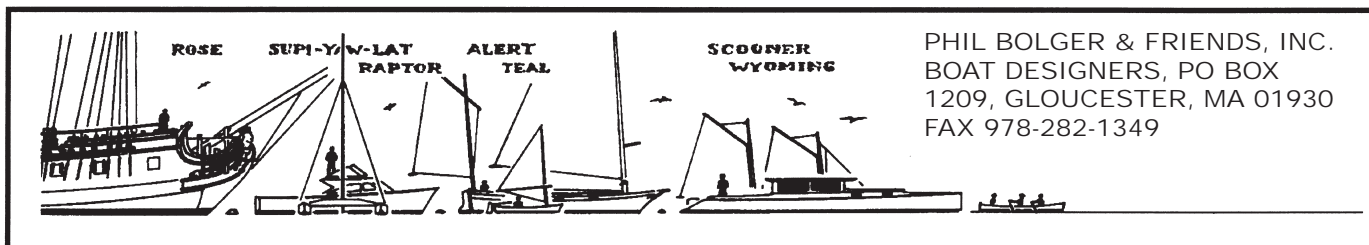
"But," according to Roberts, "once most people get started, they're addicted."

Iceboating seems to be increasing in popularity these last few years. The Chickawaukee iceboating community is currently made up of approximately 80 members from around New England. The club includes both serious racers and informal, casual sailors. Roberts said, "Usually one or two new people per year track us down and get hooked. There is a great sense of camaraderie and it is very much a community based activity. We'll have 30 to 40 boats out on a good day."

Ideal conditions for iceboating are when there is no, or very little, snow covering the ice and when the winds are blowing 10-15kts.

"20 kts or more and life gets more interesting," said Roberts. "It is a really nice sport. It feels dangerous but in reality it is not that hazardous. It is certainly less dangerous than downhill skiing. Very rarely does one feel discomfort while zipping along on an ice boat and while injuries do occur, they're not that common."

(The Apprenticeshop is a traditional wooden boatbuilding school located in Rockland's north end. The 'Shop has been teaching traditional boatbuilding techniques to local and international apprentices since 1972. The program is unique in that seamanship is an integral part of the experiential learning process. Atlantic Challenge believes that for an apprentice to realize the greatest understanding of boat building, he or she must also become a confident mariner. Through the use of boats, students learn the subtleties of construction that might otherwise go unnoticed. For further information about Apprenticeshop and other Atlantic Challenge programs, call (207) 594-1800 or visit our website at www.atlanticchallenge.com, <http://www.atlanticchallenge.com/>)



Bolger on Design

Inboard Dayboat

Design #121

26'0" x 8'0" x 2'9"

This design was made in 1959. The plans are complete in the archive but the typed key is missing and no correspondence about it has survived. A Mr. C. Basil Jayne commissioned it but I don't remember where he was or who built her. Judging from the photo she was very nicely built and true to the plans.

The layout was a common one at the time. A minor innovation was the sliding hatch in the hardtop with a little windshield to stand up behind for a better view ahead. Otherwise, there's 4'6" headroom under the beams, which is a comfortable sitting height. Apart from the engine box the cockpit is open for portable furniture. A single berth-length bench is indicated in the forepeak, which presumably also contained a toilet (in those days it may have simply been a bucket). The cockpit is not self-draining but would be easy to tent in. The photo shows a clear plastic cover for the open sides of the shelter. The tiller at the stern suggests that the owner may have had bass fishing in mind.

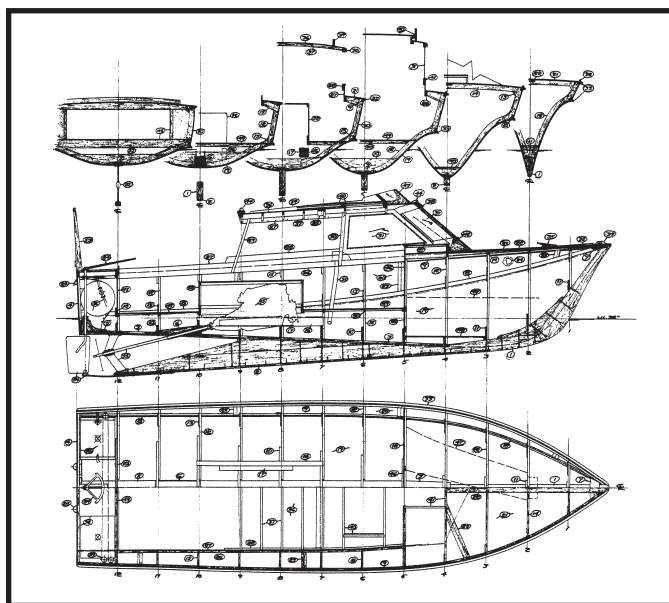
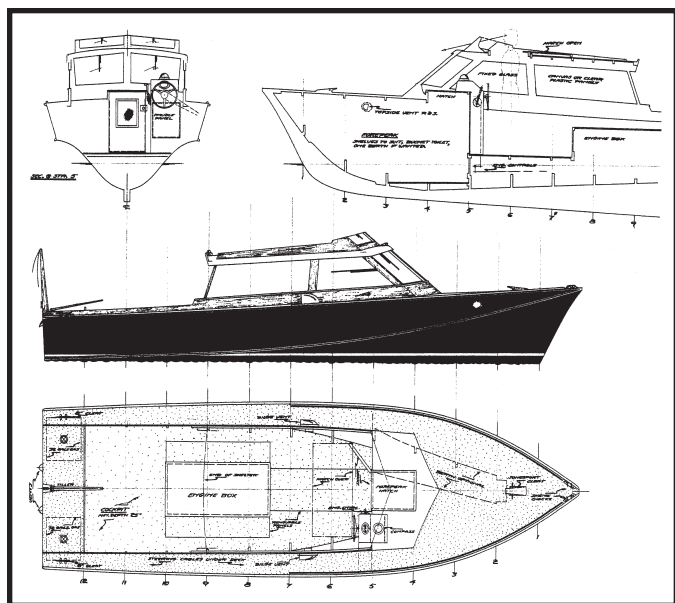
The engine seems to have been left for a later decision, probably some options were discussed in the missing key. The one outlined on the plans looks like an inline gasoline six. The reduction gear is a Paragon, a then-popular make which produced an offset from the crankshaft line which could be either above or below the crankshaft, handy to install the engine as low as possible in a



hull with this type of keel. Power would be on the order of 100hp. Speed would be perhaps 20kts, her trim and spray shape in the photo suggests a cruising speed of around 15kts. The deep forefoot would start to lift at higher speeds. With the coupling so close to the stuffing box, the engine would have had to be hard-mounted, as was common at the time anyway, and there's no sign of insulation or any attempt at noise reduction.

The bottom is strip-planked with plywood sides and deck, the deck sheathed with fabric or one of the early plastic materials to protect the plywood from the sun. The frames are sawn with plywood gussets. The backbone and skeg are conventional with the skeg much cut away aft to encourage quick turning.

The bell section hull was something of a fad at the time. John Hacker, for whom I'd worked for awhile a few years earlier, favored it. I did quite a few boats that had it, with generally good results, but I later concluded that it was better not to have it nearly so extreme, both for speed and for a soft action, and, in wood construction, for ease of planking. The chine above the static waterline the full length of the boat, and carried up to the stem head, I still think is the way to do it, and I still think that the very sharp waterlines forward are worth giving up that much space in the lower part of the bow. The photo shows how a bow like this lays its spray well aft, low, and close alongside, making for a dry boat and one that is not much stopped in choppy water.



Last winter I sent along some pictures of my Mummichog 16V under construction which appeared in the February 15, 2005 issue. This skiff was finished in the spring and it was used for fishing, clamming, and just plain beaching. Here is a photo of the finished boat. It's equipped with a 25hp Mercury 4-stroke with tiller. This combination produced a comfortable 27mph (measured by GPS). The skiff beaches easily and is not shy in a chop. This model was built with a self-bailing cockpit. A center console will also be an option. Plans will be available soon.

LOA is 15'2" to 15'4" with a beam of 6'. The hull thickness is 9mm marine

Mummichog Update

By Jerry Mathieu (www.chog.boats.com)

mahogany plywood, the bottom is 5/8" (composite 3/8" + 1/4"), with the transom a full 2" laminated and made from one sheet of 1" marine fir plywood. The transom and the bottom are covered with two layers of 6oz fiberglass cloth. A stem was bonded in place (optional) made from a piece of 2"x3"x24" old growth fir and a bronze pin was added,

this also doubles as a backup block for the trailer eye. A taped seam boat like this one does not have any ribs but still ends up as a strong and light (500lb) skiff.

My friend Tom Mello needed a river skiff and the 16V was not big enough so a new design has been started. It's a V-bottom 18' skiff, a spinoff from my flat bottom C18. The lines were drawn and we built the scale model pictured. This boat will be 17'10" with a 7' beam and a transom thickness of 2-1/2", it should weigh in at about 650lbs and will have a center console. No outboard has yet been chosen but it will be around 50hp. A spring launch is scheduled, more will follow.

The Mummichog 16-V.



Model of the Mummichog 18V.



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Bob Hicks' Commentary in the January 1 issue about his philosophy of the publishing business got me to thinking about deep but obscure philosophical subjects instead of doing like I normally do thinking about deep but obscure mechanical subjects, and I was able to finally figure out what it is that turns someone from being a useful member of society into a "philosopher." It's not a thing in the world but solitude. If you have to interact with other people all the time like, say, a checkout person at the WalMart has to do, you don't have time to think about anything useless, but if you don't do anything but peen rivets all day long or scrape wood or (Heaven forbid) sand, your mind is perfectly free to wander in all sorts of directions.

One of the deep but obscure mechanical subjects I like to think about is some kind of practical way to have an ice cube on a boat anchored in flat calm water way the hell and gone down in the south bights of Andros in the hot summertime. I tell you what, I believe I have covered all the bases (so far). I understand absorption refrigeration (ammonia/water... even the amazing Crosley "Icyball"... am also familiar with the Swedish Electrolux' patent). There is nothing to understanding refrigeration by vaporizing liquids (like Freon). I have passed over the simple but electrically inefficient Peltier device and I even figured out the obscure Sterling cycle refrigeration that uses helium to transport the heat of fusion.

I have built several prototypes of jack-leg devices including two hand-powered refrigerated thermos jugs. One worked with the pump scavenged off of a pellet pistol and the other was brilliant (if I do say so myself... is that what they call "fatuous?"). It was completely self contained and seal-less like the reciprocating compressor in a house refrigerator. It had a heavy, double acting piston that worked by inertia to compress the R12 into a liquid. You shook the whole thing to make it cool the contents of the jug.

The condenser was outside on the bottom of the thermos jug and it helped to dip it in the water every now and then. You shook a little while and dipped a little while... like I said, brilliant. It would make a thin skin of ice on the coils of the evaporator in only ten minutes of hard shaking and easy dipping. I wish I hadn't let it slip out of my hand while I was dipping the condenser over the side in the middle of the Gulf Stream. Come to think about it, though, it was probably a good thing... repetitive motion syndromes you know.

Another deep but obscure mechanical subject I love to think about (particularly when painting... I think the fumes lubricate the thought process) is various ways to circumvent "marine" machinery, I mean, I hate to voluntarily let some group of businessmen catch a stranglehold on any part of my person (particularly any part of me that, from time to time is involved in one of my great pleasures) and make me buy something I don't want. I may already have mentioned my disaffection for the rubber impeller raw water pumps which are ubiquitous in the recreational marine engine field.

I think I may have said that those things were invented by marine engine manufacturers as a way to sell more marine engines and, if that's the purpose, they sure are doing the job. I have seen enough fried but otherwise good-as-new marine engines that, if placed end to end, stretch all the way from here to no telling where. I have been running a

Retirement Plan for the Self Employed Boatbuilder

By Robb White

diaphragm style agricultural pump (\$55 at the local farm co-op... less than half what an impeller and seal kit for a Mercruiser costs... Volvo... child, please) on my inboard boat for four years without any maintenance at all. I am now looking at those crop spray roller pumps. They say they'll pass granules of solid fertilizer without damage and are self priming at 50' of head.

I have a lot of things like that to think about... the antifreeze-in-the-foot method of outboard motor cooling, the aerobic system boat toilet, the sink drain mounted, retractable refrigeration condenser... little things like that. But sometimes I get tired of thinking about machinery and now I can't get up all that much enthusiasm for thinking about simple social problems like various ways to impress people with my status without buying an SUV.

I have started thinking about ways to side-step complex social problems like medical problems and economic shortfalls. I despise these damned pharmaceutical companies and their knee-jerk cohorts in the prescription business. I know my skeletomuscular system is shot from decades of abuse but I'll be damned if I'll jump on any televised bandwagon and explain to my doctor why he should prescribe some pill that will enable me to prance down the beach like a teenager while it destroys my kidneys and liver and shrivels my heart into a prune just because my leg goes to sleep on me any time I have to ride in the car more than an hour or two. I am always looking for alternatives of all sorts.

You know I don't have a retirement plan. If it weren't for all these skeletomuscular system problems I could continue building boats and live on my wife's teacher's salary (now pension) like I have always done, but my feet just aren't up to all the marathon sessions I used to do. Hell, man, I am getting old is what. I was thinking that I could write stories and sell them for a little retirement money. I have always written an awful (some say real awful) lot and have had spotty and sporadic success at getting a little of it published, but that little money was like the boat money... insignificant. I think I must be doing something wrong. I can't get an edgewise word in *The Reader's Digest* or *The New Yorker*.


I have been thinking about that and thinking about what those who do manage to make money writing do differently from me. One thing "successful" writers do is to get famous for something else first. Take Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinski, for instance. It was a long and tough row to hoe for Bill to get to where he could hit the best seller list, but you know what Monica did wasn't any real feat. I could... well, maybe not.

I thought about going to writing school but dismissed that because I don't know any successful writers who learned their talent in school. Ferrol Sams began writing when he was at least as old as I am and was very good and mighty successful... hit the best seller list with his first book, *Run With the Horsemen*. He went to school to learn to be a

medical doctor. My father (also Robb White) was a very successful writer, too. His college degree was whatever engineering they were teaching at the Naval Academy in the '20s


I know one woman who made up her mind that she was tired of teaching school and, since she was not old enough for a pension, started to write and hit the big time immediately. Do you think she majored in "writing?" Do you think she majored in "education?" Nobody with any sense at all majors in either one of those things. She studied nursing and was certified in that field but she decided that she really did not like dealing firsthand with incontinence, disease, and death so she started teaching little children. Then she realized that not only was she still having to deal with incontinence and disease but she also had the damned school administration which was as least as hopeless as death, so she decided to write as a way to get out of that fix.

None of the successful writers I know took any writing classes. Neither did Poe, Twain, Kipling, Will Rogers, or Steinbeck. Hell, Steinbeck was a marine biologist. Hell, I am a marine biologist. It looks like I don't have to follow Monica Lewinski's lead after all. I am already qualified.



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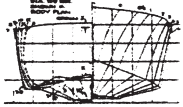
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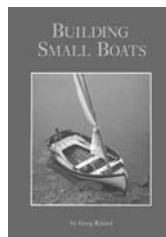
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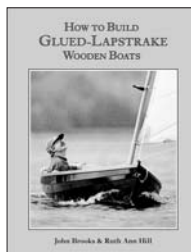


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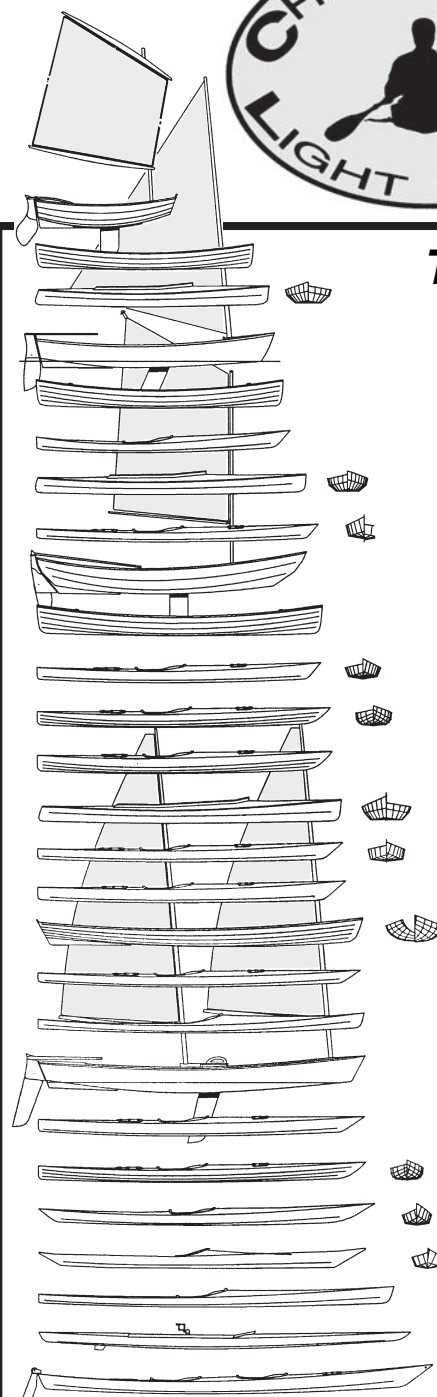
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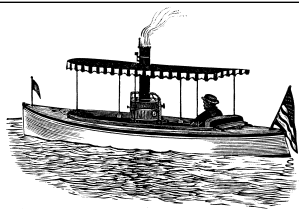
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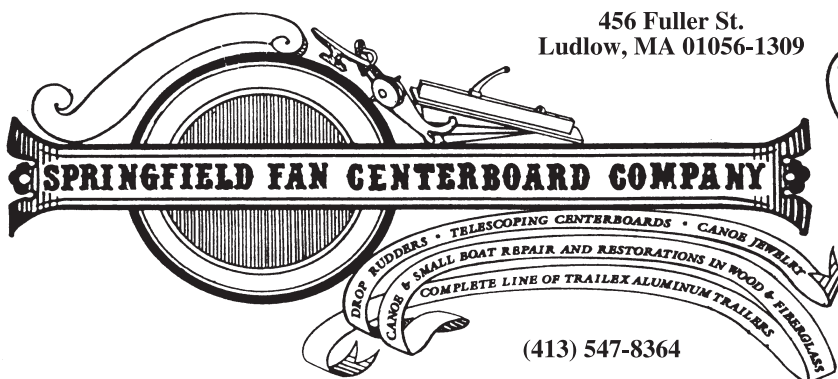
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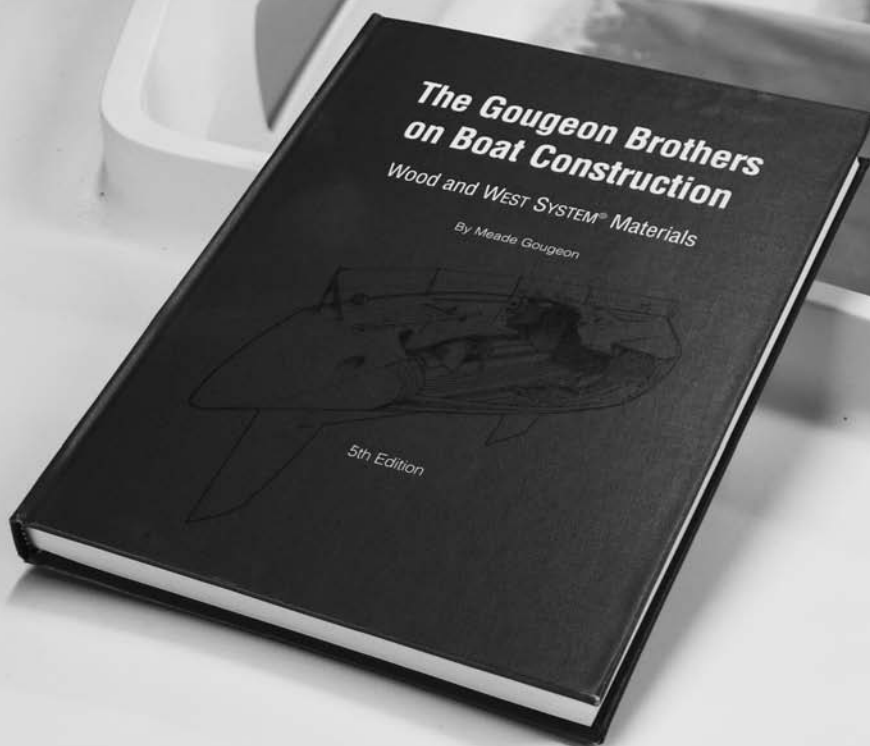
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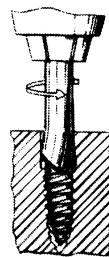


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17' Folbot Sea Kayak, older naugahyde covered kit boat, non-folding. In gd clean shape. Incl pair of basic paddles. \$250 firm. BOB HICKS, Wenham, MA, (978) 774-0906, 7-10am, 6-9pm (21)

14' Lowell Surf (Swampscott) Dory, custom built by Jim & George O'Dell in the Lowell Boat Shop in '84. Mahogany transom, thwarts & forepeak locker finished bright. Cedar on oak, bronze fastened w/bottom & 1st strike fiberglassed during building. Inside & top outside strike also bright. Sole is antiskid Mast Buff w/Seattle Grey topsides & Interlux green bottom. 3 removable rowing stations w/2 prs Shaw & Tenny spruce flat bladed oars: One 8' & one 9' both w/sewn leathers & bronze oarlocks. Galv trlr & hardly used Cordura mooring cover. Always stored in my barn. Blemish free, paint & brightwork perfect. Asking \$6,750. Pictures available. BOB NYMAN, Little Compton, RI, (401) 635-8937 (22)

11'6" Charlotte Lapstrake Canoe, built by Thomas J. Hill. Weight 25lbs, crimson hull w/light tan interior, mahogany gunnels & heart-shaped backrest. Cond like new. This boat is like a piece of furniture. Original owner bought it at the Newport Wooden Boat show. Incl Shaw & Tenney double paddle. Reason for sale, just not being used. Picture of canoe can be seen on cover of Thomas J. Hill's book, *Ultralight Boat Building*. Located in FL nr St. Augustine. Asking \$2,200. TONY FIORE, Palm Coast, FL, (386) 446-5519, <tnfiore@cfl.rr.com> (22)

'02 20' Simmons Sea Skiff, Honduran mahogany framing, Meranti Plywood Hull, 50hp Yamaha 4-stroke, center console, fully equipped. \$20,000. MATT APGAR, Epsom, NH, (603) 736-8128, <mmmapgar@metrocast.net> (22)

William English Canoe, 16'x30". Easy restoration \$1,500. **'35 Old Town H.W. Sailing Canoe**, great wood, fair orig canvas. \$400. Pictures available. GUS SCHULTHEISS, Hampton, VA, (757) 876-1115, <gusandjoan@verizon.net> (22)

29' Double Ender, '49, carvel planked, 4-cyl Gray Marine, lots of brass. Fullsails. W/trlr, heavy tandem will handle 30' sailboat, new tires, screw jacks. Nds work. \$2,500. **12' FG Canoe**, vy light, rush seats. \$200. **7' Pram Tender**, exc cond. \$250. **13-1/2' Penn Yan Runabout**, '32. Cedar strip on oak ribs. W/trlr, ready for water. \$1,650. DOOLAN, Ripton, VT, (802) 388-4119 (22)

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BOB WOOD, Seminole, FL, (727) 392-1822, <ocita43@juno.com> (23)



'Madame Tirza' Classic Catboat, Charles Witholtz design, fg over marine plywood, completed in '96 by Bill Simonsen and owned by 1 family. 19'6" LWL, 9'6" beam, 135sf sail, gaff rigged, 3 rows of reef points, incl jiffy reefing. Sail is newly cleaned in perfect cond w/sail cover, also winter cover. Yanmar IB engine, 1-cylinder Diesel, torques out at 11hp at the prop, faithfully maintained & serviced & in exc cond. Skeg keel draws only 26", no cb, no leaks. Huge, roomy cabin & cockpit w/storage closet & drawers, inside lighting, fitted cushions on 2 bunks. Varnished wooden boat hook & varnished rigging blocks. 800lbs of inside ballast on the keel & approximately 200lbs of ballast neatly applied to the bottom of the keel. Boat is a fast sailer. New owner needs to do some cosmetic work. Asking \$10,500. Located in Toms River, NJ. BARRY LEVINE, Toms River, NJ, (732) 270-5210 (22)



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'74 Cal 27, slps 4. Dependable 2-cycle 1-cyl IB. Newer set of sails in vy gd cond. A lot of boat for the money. \$3,000.

JOHN COLLINS, Holland, MI, (616) 335-3260 (22)

16' Flat Bottomed Lapstrake Skiff, 5-12' beam, two pr oarlocks, dual axle Peterson trlr (needs tires). Last registered/floated 2001, did not leak. \$1150 takes all. JODY REYNOLDS, Cazenovia, NY, (315) 655-2040 (22)



20' Motor Launch, Kingston lobster boat, George Chaisson built '16. Has been well maintained. 12hp SB12Yanmar Diesel. \$8,000 obo. FRANK VALENTINO, S. Dennis, MA, (508) 385-8510 (23)

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'92 Suzuki 2hp OB, standard shaft. Used as an auxiliary on our 15' sailboat. Gd shape & dependable. Just had \$400 checkup by Suzuki authorized dealer. We have 2 motors & only need 1! Asking \$300. RICHARD EARLEY, Coventry, RI, (401) 821-2330, <rsel@cox.net> (22)



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Klepper Aeriis II frame & sail kit. Frame has some minor damage and needs varnish. \$200. VINCE ROYCE, Bennington, VT, (802) 442-2699, <vroyce@sover.net> (22)



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Gray Marine Lugger, Sea Scout 4-cyl w/trans. \$200. '59 **Chev 283 Marine Engine**, w/trans & manifolds. \$400. **4-cyl Hercules Marine Engine**, w/trans. \$250. DOOLAN, Ripton, VT, (802) 388-4119 (22)

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Small Boats, for apartment dwellers: Elegant Punt, Weekend Dingy, Stubby, Cabin Boy, Halfing reviewed. Article, send \$5. PAUL AUSTIN, 3521 West Northgate Dr. 1009, Irving TX, 75062, <Sail389@aol.com> (23)

Robb White & Sons Sport Boat, handy, pretty, proven 16' x 43" strip planked skiff. Will plane with 2 adults with 4hp. Full sized mold patterns, complete instructions. \$75. SASE for photos & specs. ROBB WHITE & SONS, Box 561, Thomasville, GA 31799 (TFP)



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BOB HICKS, 29 Burley St. Wenham, MA 01984-12943, (978) 774-0906 7-10am, 6-9pm (TF)

Catalogs/Magazines/Newsletters, which might be of interest. Before I toss these I'm offering them for cost of postage & handling. Packet of 4 *Gazette Annual*, 2000, 2002-04, Antique Boat Museum Journals, \$5. Packet of 5 *Windling World*, 2003-05 New Zealand Model Boat Journals, \$3. Sent Priority Mail. Call to confirm availability before sending payment.

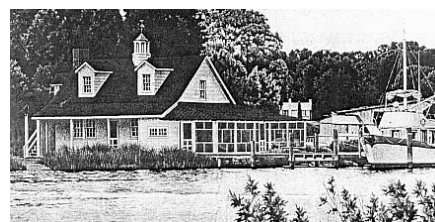
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Special Interest Publications: The Gaff Rigged Yachtsman, 1944 Darrell McClure Cartoon Book. \$5. *Essex: (MA) The Shipbuilding Town*, 1976 Bi-Centennial History Journal. \$5. *Building the Harvey Gamage*, Warren Paper Co. Color Photo Portfolio. \$5. Sent Priority Mail. Call to confirm availability before sending payment.



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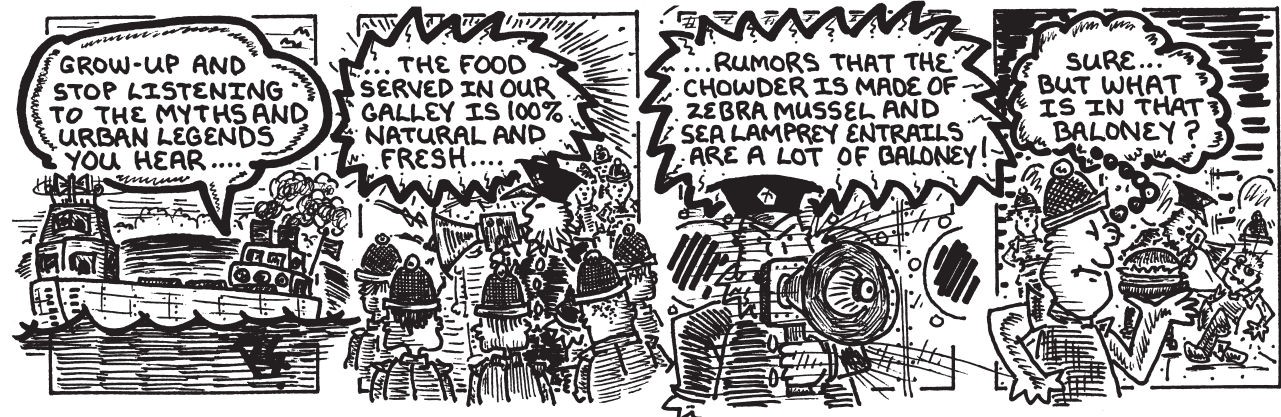
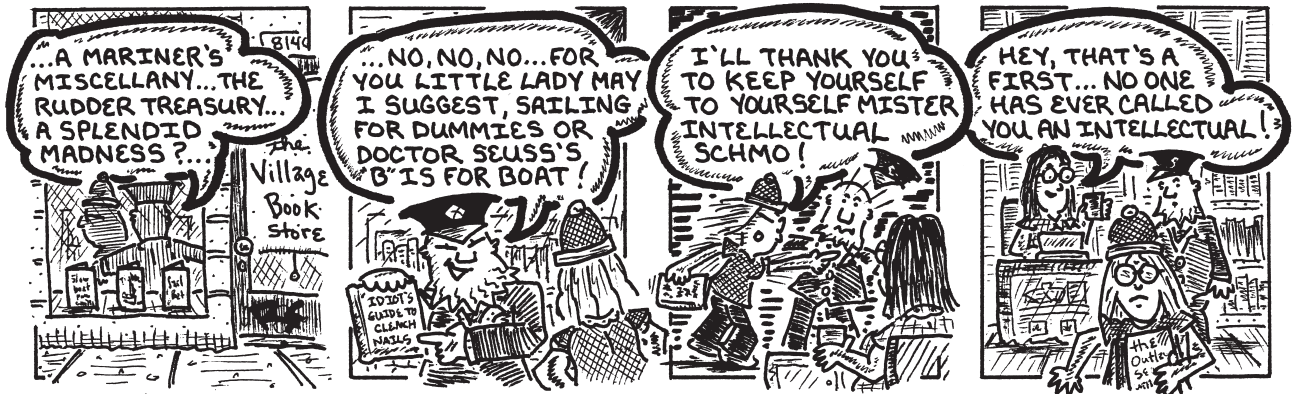
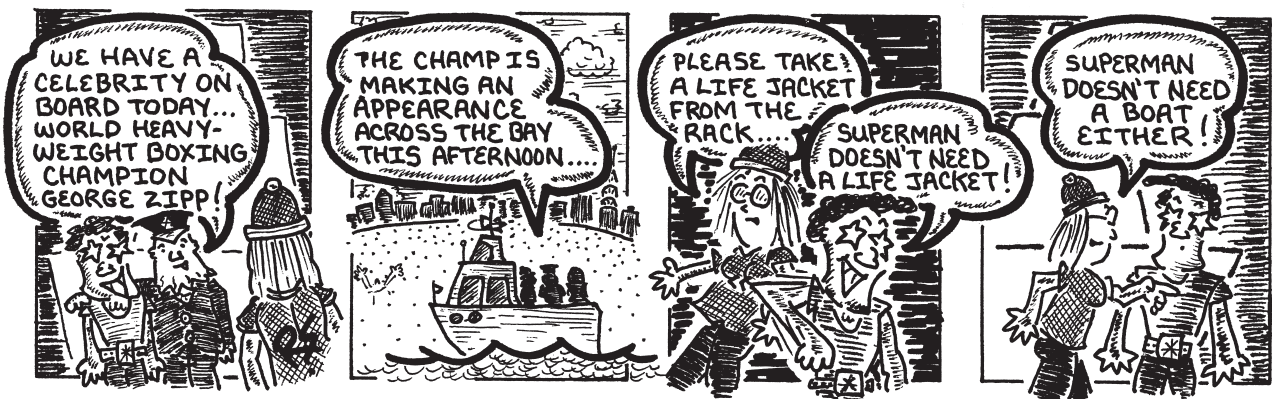
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